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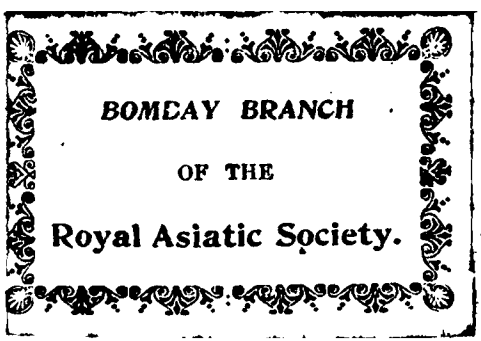

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THE NEW LUCIAN

THE NEW LUCIAN

BEING

A SERIES OF

DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD

94450

H. D. TRAILL

LONDON: CHAPMAN AND HALL
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1884

LONDON:
R. CLAY, SONS, AND TAYLOR,
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TO

E. T.

"Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which He hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that is thy portion in this life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest."—Eccl. ix. 9, 10.

What matter though such things have never been,
Nor shall be? the Ecclesiast hath said.
Though but in mockery the Samosatene
Imagined his confabulating dead?
What matter though nor knowledge nor device,
Nor work nor wisdom in the grave there be?—
Does not the Preacher bid us once and twice
Live out in joy love's life of vanity?
So live we, then! nor heed what whisper tells
That closest union heaviest reckoning pays
In shock of loss and anguish of farewells
At that eternal parting of the ways.

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THE NEW LUCIAN.

LORD WESTBURY AND BISHOP WILBERFORCE.

WEST. How strange, Bishop, that we should never have met before! I arrived here in the very next boat after yours;[1] our obols must have clinked together in the ferryman's pouch. Yet a decade has nearly passed, according to earthly reckoning, ere we have fallen in with each other. Surprising!

WILB. Hardly so to me, my lord. I have never sought—forgive me—the society of lawyers.

WEST. Nor I. I found them but depressing company on earth; and, though death could scarcely add to their dulness, it seemed paradoxical to suppose that it would enliven them.

WILB. As sarcastic as ever, I observe, my lord.

WEST. Say as outspoken, my dear Bishop, and add, as little malicious on that very account. Malice is a natural exudation in every mind, and it will remain there as a poison if it is not thrown off as an excretion. It is only

[1] July 20th and 19th, 1873.

the sarcastic, as they are called, who get rid of it by its proper eliminator—the tongue.

WILB. The excretory function was admirably active, then, in your lordship's case; and your mental health, if that, indeed, will insure it, should have been excellent.

WEST. You are good enough to say so. But health is one thing and popularity another. It would have been far better for me, of course, to have only thought what are called ill-natured things of my neighbours than to have said them. Or, if some relief was necessary, I should have committed them only to the discreet guardianship of a diary. But then, to do that, one must be a man of discretion; and that, my dear Bishop, is a quality which, unlike yourself in both respects, I neither inherited nor bequeathed.

WILB. Your mind seems secreting very rapidly just now, my lord; and the activity with which you are throwing off its products is rather—— well, it scarcely tends to enhance the long-deferred pleasure of this interview.

WEST. Indeed! I would not willingly do anything to diminish it. But our subject is, for me, perhaps, a somewhat too stimulating one. Shall we change it for something a little less personal to myself than the mental and moral characteristics of your lordship's very humble servant? Would you discuss with me the position and prospects of the Church of England?

WILB. With *you*, my lord? Impossible!

WEST. Why so? We have more than once exchanged views upon that matter in the House of Lords.

WILB. Yes; as ships exchange broadsides. But I do not care to revive old quarrels in the Shades; and an amicable, mutually helpful discussion of such a subject with *you*, is, I repeat, impossible.

WEST. With *me?* The emphasis on that word is neither complimentary nor altogether—— but I refrain. It is not for me to instruct your lordship in the obligations of charity.

WILB. My dear Lord Westbury, it is not a question of charity. One may wish to discuss colours with a blind man, and may most sincerely lament the affliction that keeps our minds apart. But apart they must remain; and not all the charity in the world would bring them together.

WEST. Your lordship's metaphors are discouraging.

WILB. Literal language would, I fear, be more so.

WEST. Not necessarily. I can hardly account it a privilege to be compelled to fit the cap on for myself, especially when the hatter is present, and might relieve me of the task. I should have deemed it more truly polite of you to have said in plain terms that I am spiritually blind.

WILB. Well, suppose me to have said so. What then?

WEST. Then I should only have replied that your lordship pays but an ill compliment to the constitution of a State Church in which for several years I filled a high judicial office.

WILB. That, alas! is true.

West. *Alas?* Your interjections, Bishop, are as discouraging as your metaphors. For which was your

alas! intended? For the affliction of the judge, or for his infliction on the Church? Or for your own indiscretion in speaking evil of dignities?

WILB. You have rebuked me for not dealing plainly with you, Lord Westbury. I trust I shall not now be blamed for the opposite fault. I yielded to no one in admiration for your consummate judicial powers, but I confess I shared the view taken by most good Churchmen of your position with respect to the Church.

WEST. Which was . . . . ?

WILB. Nay, you cannot be ignorant of it. Why this pressure upon me to speak plainly?

WEST. Why this need of pressure after your promise of plain speech?

WILB. Well, then . . . . which was that your lordship's presence and influence on the Judicial Committee of Privy Council at a time of sore trial for the Church of England was a misfortune of the first magnitude.

WEST. Because of my "consummate judicial powers?"

WILB. Because of your lordship's known laxity of moral principle and complete indifference, or rather utter insensibility, to religious ideas.

WEST. I hesitated just now to remind a bishop of his charity. I am even more loth to recall to him the name of another of the cardinal virtues—that of faith. You surely cannot think that Providence abandoned the cause of the Church to a perverse and ungodly judge?

WILB. God forbid; I have always believed—it would have been impious to doubt—that you were an instrument in the Divine hand.

WEST. I have always believed it myself.

WILB. I have never doubted that the judgments of the Judicial Committee, during your term of service on it, were overruled for good.

WEST. You mean in a theological sense. Technically, of course, they were final. But if our judgments were divinely protected from error, why object to me as a judge? Must I remind your lordship, not only of scriptural virtues, but of ecclesiastical formularies? The Twenty-sixth Article declares, if I recollect it rightly, that the efficacy of the sacraments is not diminished by the unworthiness of the minister, and surely what is true of an officiating priest in the discharge of his sacred duties must apply *à fortiori* to that (spiritually speaking) far lower minister—a lay Chancellor acting as an ecclesiastical appellate judge.

WILB. The comparison savours somewhat of profanity. But your lordship should have finished the Article: "Nevertheless it appertaineth to the discipline of the Church that inquiry be made of evil ministers, and that they be accused by those that have knowledge of their offences: and finally, being found guilty, by just judgment be deposed." You had forgotten the conclusion of the Article perhaps?

WEST. Ahem! . . . . No, Bishop, no. We lawyers are not in the habit of quoting a part of a passage without knowing the whole. But, I repeat, I fail to understand the ecclesiastical objection to Gallio, even from the ecclesiastic's own point of view. The ruling of the proconsul of Achaia has always seemed to me a very sound one, and his indifference to religion—if indeed that were predicated of him by

the inspired penman, which in fact it is not—would, always assuming his subjection to the Divine guidance, have been immaterial.

WILB. There are such things as weak brethren, my lord. Your lordship's authority in matters of faith and ceremonial was a stumbling-block to many.

WEST. Yes; and many a bitter sectary, thirsting for the discomfiture of his opponents, was tripped up by it. The tables are turned now, Bishop, and it is your own party who are on the defensive. Well would it be for them if a Gallio or two of my unworthy type could return to stand their friend.

WILB. I own I should prefer some of your lordship's contemporaries to yourself. But, alas! they cannot return "to teach the laws of death's untrodden realm."

WEST. No, or they would take back more jurisprudence than they brought with them. But if clerically-minded judges are all you want, you have nothing to complain of. The interests of the Church are surely safe in the hands of Lord Selborne. He has made its songs, or at least collected them, and can be trusted therefore with the less important duty of declaring its laws.

WILB. Lord Selborne, however, is not immortal.

WEST. No, in spite of his devotion to what is understood to be the chief employment of eternity. But the immortality of a Chancellor would derange our whole political system.

WILB. He is a sound Churchman. But who is to succeed him?

WEST. Have you not Lord Cairns?

WILB. Lord Cairns!

WEST. There is a significance in your lordship's intonation which I cannot affect to misunderstand. We will say no more of Lord Cairns. And he, after all—as, for that matter, the Chancellor too—is but one member of the much maligned court whose deliberation I used once, under Providence, to attempt to guide. Moreover, there are archiepiscopal assessors in Church cases upon whom at least you can rely. The Archbishop of York——

WILB. The Archbishop of York!

WEST. More accentual eloquence! Let us say no more then, of the Archbishop of York.

WILB. I dismiss him willingly. Of the two I should prefer Lord Cairns.

WEST. Your lordship's leaning towards the lay lawyer is as natural and blameless as mine towards the ecclesiastic. We know the purity of our preferences; yet there are those, Bishop, who would attribute them to professional jealousy.

WILB. You, my lord, are surely safe against any such imputation, and, for myself, I can afford to despise it. There could be no room for envy in the case; and for obvious reasons.

WEST. Obvious indeed! For your lordship must mean, of course, that envy between prelates is theologically impossible. It was only by Divine permission that Dr. Thomson could ever have risen to the see of York; and when once your faith had surmounted the severe trial of believing that he could have been Divinely permitted to distance you in the race, you must have felt that it bordered

on impiety to grudge him such a summons from on high. You may well say, therefore, that there were obvious reasons for not envying him.

WILB. The reasons which you mention, Lord Westbury, were not those to which I referred. There is a lamentable lack of reverence in your manner of handling holy things. The appointments of Archbishops are indeed, like all other earthly events, of Divine permission, but the inscrutable counsels of Providence may occasionally permit . . .

WEST. The appointment of the second-best candidate?

WILB. Your interruption is hardly in keeping with your usual courtesy, my lord, and it attributes to me language which I have given you no warrant for putting into my mouth. But though I should be guilty of insincerity were I to pretend that I considered myself worthy of no higher preferment than fell to my lot, I repeat that I did not feel, and that I was incapable of feeling, any jealousy of those by whom, as you express it, I was distanced in the race.

WEST. You will do me the justice to remember, Bishop, that I entirely acquitted you of any such sentiment. My only offence appears to have been that I credited you with higher motives for your magnanimity than in your apostolic meekness you are willing to ascribe to yourself. I only wish that I could claim the same elevated sanction for my own humble exercise of the same virtue. But lawyers have never been enjoined to regard the success of a rival as a matter of Divine ordinance.

WILB. Nor, do I see, my lord, that you, at least, require any such injunction to the practice of magnanimity. A

lawyer who has held and has distinguished himself in the highest post in his profession might surely regard his successors in that office without feeling any temptation to envy.

WEST. Is it possible, Bishop, that you can imagine me in danger of envying a Lord Chancellor? I who have known so many? I who have measured so many of those feet "whose length is equity"? Your lordship must be jesting.

WILB. You spoke just now of rivals.

WEST. Yes; rivals in the knowledge and interpretation of the law, competitors for precedence on the roll of English jurists. That, my dear Bishop, was the rivalry, and the only rivalry, to which I referred.

WILB. Distinction as a jurist, then, is not to be presumed from the fact of advancement to the highest place in the legal profession?

WEST. Pardon me, it is to be presumed: but presumptions of law, you know, are open to rebuttal by facts; and the presumption of a Chancellor's law has sometimes been rebutted by certain facts disclosed in his first judgment.

WILB. I cannot but think, my lord, that you are here indulging your satirical temper to exaggeration. Success in the legal profession may not stamp a man as a great jurist, but I think it may fairly be held to argue adequate capacity for the highest judicial office.

WEST. Your lordship has doubtless some reason for coupling professional success with advancement to the highest judicial office; but I cannot divine what it is.

I was not aware that Chancellors either were or could be selected on professional grounds alone.

WILB. Not on those grounds alone, perhaps; but, if they are promoted mainly for political aptitude, they have also to qualify themselves as lawyers for the preferment bestowed upon them.

WEST. Qualify themselves! Exactly. An extremely happy phrase! It quite recalls old university days, does it not, Bishop? "Satisfecit nobis examinatoribus." The pushing advocate who goes in for high political honours, is always at least compelled to produce a *testamur* in law. The class-man in the Cabinet is at any rate never less than a pass-man in the Court of Chancery. It is an admirable arrangement.

WILB. I think, with submission, my lord, that you somewhat overrate the difficulty experienced by others in performing tasks which to you were easy. Most Chancellors, after all, have acquitted themselves creditably as judges, and there is, perhaps, no great rashness in assuming that any man who has excelled his fellows in the exceedingly difficult art of politics must have brains to fill the Woolsack.

WEST. As epigrammatic as ever I see, Bishop, even in the Shades. You are right. I have known no Chancellor however inferior in capacity whose brains were not perfectly well adapted to such a use. But have we not wandered somewhat far afield? I thought we were discussing Churchmen and not lawyers.

WILB. We were discussing both; and their respective qualifications as ecclesiastical judges.

WEST. Ah, true! I was analysing the composition of the Judicial Committee and the extent to which it represented the interests of the Church: and you rejected the representative claims of the Archbishop of York. Well, if the prelates in the Court are too secularly-minded, you may, as I have said, redress the balance with clerical laymen. I have given you Lord Selborne already, and now let me remind you of the silver-tongued Lord Coleridge—a Chrysostom in the less precious metal. You would find plenty of clericalism in him surely?

WILB. Yes, he is not as destitute of religious instincts as are some distinguished lawyers.

WEST. You are a master of ironical adjectives, Bishop; but I suppose I may take the first half of your sentence as serious. Lord Coleridge *has* the requisite amount of clericalism—how come by I know not; but I suppose he felt bound to take to it out of respect for his great-uncle's habit of stupefying himself with theology, as a variation upon opium. However there is Lord Coleridge—with his clericalism inherited or acquired. And now who else is there? let me see. No; I can think of no others—Lord Coleridge, I imagine, exhausts the list.

WILB. Completely, my lord. You need not pursue your inquiries further. The race of eminent lawyers who are also sound Churchmen is becoming extinct. As for lawyers who, without attaining eminence in their profession, are yet winning their way, by the political road, to the final Court of Appeal in ecclesiastical causes, what nowadays is to be expected from them? One shudders to think that some mere unforeseen accident of politics might raise that—how

shall I describe him?—that burly Erastian, Sir William Harcourt, to the woolsack?

WEST. Aha! I welcome the importation of that name into our colloquy.

WILB. Indeed! The name of Sir William Harcourt?

WEST. No; of Erastian. Do you know, Bishop, I have been called an Erastian myself?

WILB. You distress rather than surprise me. The world is very censorious.

WEST. I do not fear its censures, but I confess I like to comprehend them. Your lordship will recollect Dr. Johnson's famous triumph in the fish market. Obscurity may lend such a sting to vituperation, as not even the most callous can endure. I have smarted under "Erastian" like the Billingsgate lady under the contumely of "noun-substantive;" and have sought far more patiently for a definition. Am I right in believing that "Erastus" is simply the Græco-Latinised form of the name of Lieber, a German physician of the sixteenth century, who opposed the Calvinistic system of ecclesiastical discipline?

WILB. Yes; your lordship may so far trust the theological encyclopædia which you have been evidently studying.

WEST. I thank you for the assurance, Bishop, and forgive you the sneer. If theologians would only consult lawyers in the lawyer's art as readily as we consult them in theirs, it would be better for them, and worse, professionally speaking, for us. But I confess a desire to economise the time consumed in such researches. Does your lordship think that in order to form correct ideas

of the doctrine of Erastus, it would be absolutely necessary for me to study that series of Theses which he afterwards, I believe, collected into the treatise "De Excommunicatione"?

WILB. No; I think you may spare yourself so distasteful a labour. In the modern political usage of the word, Erastianism need not take long to define. It is the name of a system which is at once a usurpation and a despotism, an encroachment of Cæsar upon the kingdom of Christ, and the imposition of a heavier tax upon His people than the hardest of the Cæsars ever levied from a conquered race. It is Tiberius exacting the tribute money, only with the souls of the faithful for denarii.

WEST. Thanks, Bishop. I admire the rhetorical fervour of your analysis. But I have noticed that the definitions of Churchmen are often as animated as lay invectives. Meanwhile, however, though I now know that my enemies did not mean to compliment me in calling me an Erastian, I am afraid I know little more.

WILB. Perhaps it would be simplest to define an Erastian as one who would degrade the Church into a "Department of the State"—one who holds the State to be not only the creator and arbiter of the temporal rights of the Church, but to have supreme authority over her as regards her spiritual functions also.

WEST. Is *that* an Erastian, Bishop? "Par ma foi," as M. Jourdain says, "il y a plus de quarante ans que je dis de la prose sans que j'en susse rien." Why, my dear Bishop, that is simply the plain prose of the relations between Church and State as talked by ninety-nine

Englishman out of every hundred, "sans qu'il s'en sussent rien." The man you meet in the omnibus has been an Erastian all his life without knowing it.

WILB. That is likely enough, my lord; but it is lamentable to find such ignorance in high places.

WEST. Enlighten it then, Bishop. Explain these things to the benighted master of Israel who sat so long on the judgment-seat, the victim, in a double sense, of judicial blindness. Delineate, I beg of you, this sharp boundary between the temporal rights and spiritual functions of the Church—this landmark which it is Erastianism to overstep. Is its recognition traceable in the suit instituted by one of your lordship's right reverend brethren against a certain Essayist and Reviewer, and carried on appeal to the Court of which I was an unworthy member? Was there no Erastianism in the conduct of a bishop who asked us to examine the defendant's doctrines for heresy, and to deprive him of his benefice as a heretic? Or was the only Erastianism ours for deciding against the episcopal promoter, and, as profane jesters described it, dismissing his formidable client "with costs"?

WILB. The tone of your questions is hardly seemly, Lord Westbury, but I will answer them. It is, doubtless, the function of the State to affirm, through its judges, the doctrines of the Church; but it is for the Church herself to define them.

WEST. Where and when has she done so independently of the State? In which of the transactions or documents of the Reformation was any such claim allowed? Did

the policy of Henry VIII. or of Elizabeth recognise it? Do even the Articles themselves assert it?

WILB. Unquestionably. "The Church," says the Twentieth Article, "hath power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith."

WEST. Where, then, does this authority reside? In Convocation? Take care, Bishop. It was once my painful duty to rebuke you for an attempted encroachment on the ecclesiastical authority of the Crown; and I am not clear as a lawyer that, even *here*, it might not be possible for you to expose yourself to the penalties of a *præmunire*.

WILB. I wonder, I must say, at your lordship's recalling the memory of an altercation in which I was generally held to have had the best of it.

WEST. It would ill become me, Bishop, to dispute your account of the matter. You undoubtedly had the last word, and that is an advantage which even the House of Lords was able to appreciate.

WILB. Surely, Lord Westbury, my reply was more warmly applauded than your attack.

WEST. A reply generally is, unless the speaker is too angry to be articulate; but the reply of an indignant Bishop would, I make bold to say, receive encouragement from any assembly in the world. You must surely have noticed—at least if such scenes are ever witnessed by episcopal eyes—you must surely have noticed how the sympathies of the spectators gather round the lady-combatant in a street encounter between husband and wife. A Bishop at blows with a temporal peer, and still

more with a lawyer, makes much the same appeal to the sentiments of the bystanders.

WILB. I will not discuss our quarrel further, my lord. Enough that I was satisfied with the part I played in it. Let us return to the point we were discussing when you revived the recollection of this ancient conflict. It is for the Church, I say, to define her doctrines, though it may be for the State to affirm them through its judges.

WEST. The distinction, Bishop, is too subtle for my blunt wits.

WILB. Then death, my lord, must have dulled instead of brightening your intellectual part. For I had no difficulty in explaining the distinction to you on earth.

WEST. Doubtless, then, it was too unsubstantial to fix itself in my memory.

WILB. Not at all. You objected on various grounds to the plan of judicial reform in which I had embodied it, but you never denied that I had effected a true separation of functions between the Church and State, in the determination of ecclesiastical cases.

WEST. A judge, Bishop, must not be taken to affirm everything which he does not deny. My objections were probably confined to the various grounds which you mention, because those grounds sufficed to dispose of your scheme. But pray let me hear it once more. I am quite willing to sit in error upon myself.

WILB. What I proposed was the establishment of a Court of Episcopal referees, not in substitution for, but in addition to, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council; and that whenever a question of Divine law was involved

in any ecclesiastical proceeding, this Court should be asked —not, How is the Church to decide? but—What is the doctrine of the Church of England on this question? The *fact* of the answer would satisfy the Church that her doctrines remained intact under the legal decision, however heterodox the principles of that decision might be. Thus, for instance (I am quoting from recollection a letter which I once wrote to your lordship), thus, for instance, "in the Gorham case the lawyers would still, it may be, have decided that Mr. Gorham's book did not so categorically contradict the articles and formularies as to subject him to deprivation. But with this would have gone out the ecclesiastical answer that the Church of England taught that every rightly baptised infant was regenerate, and this would have saved us from the great schism under which we have ever since languished."

WEST. Proceed, Bishop. I am all attention.

WILB. Proceed, my lord? I have nothing to add. My scheme is before you.

WEST. Indeed? Then I certainly recognise nothing which I could ever have . . . .

WILB. I did not say you approved it.

WEST. Your lordship has not anticipated the concluding word of my sentence. I was not going to say "approved" but "understood." The statement you have just made reveals to me no project which I can either understand at this moment, or can believe myself to have at any time comprehended.

WILB. This is mere perversity, my lord. I claim at any rate to have demonstrated the practical soundness

of my theories. Having laid down the principle that it is for the Church to define her own doctrines, though it is for the State to affirm them through its judges, I have proceeded to formulate a plan, in which the doctrinal authority of the Church is at once rendered independent of, and prevented from encroaching upon, the judicial authority of the State. . . . . You are silent. Can you deny that I have done this?

WEST. What an interesting passage in ecclesiastical history, Bishop, is the Jansenist controversy! And how singularly does this proposal of yours recall it!

WILB. Only to so learned a theologian as yourself, my lord. To my own superficial acquaintance with that controversy it suggests no parallel. Will you again give me the benefit of your erudition?

WEST. I seem destined to be your instructor, Bishop, or your butt. I am glad, however, to be of service to you in either capacity. Your proposal, then, recalls the attempt of the Jansenists to evade the censure of Innocent X. The Pope, they declared, was infallible only in matter of doctrine, and liable to human error in matter of fact. The distinction between the *droit* and the *fait* appears to have struck your lordship as the key to the problem of ecclesiastical discipline; and you accordingly propose to divide jurisdiction between the Bishops and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council on a similar principle. The Bishops are to lay down the law of the Church, and the Judicial Committee are to decide whether the teaching of an incriminated clerk conforms to or departs from it.

WILB. I did not say "the law of the Church." On the contrary, I carefully refrained from using the expression. I said the Bishops were to declare "the doctrine of the Church."

WEST. Which differs from its law in what respect? .... Your lordship hesitates. May I ask whether the Judicial Committee is to be *bound*, under your lordship's scheme, to take the doctrine of the Church to be in every case what the Bishops declare it to be, and, waiving any doubts of their own as to whether it accords with the true interpretation of the articles and formularies, to confine themselves to considering whether the language of an alleged heretic can or cannot be made to square with it? If so, I should be glad, Bishop, of your assistance in distinguishing the doctrine of the Church from the "law of the Church," the episcopal referees from a bench of judges, and the Privy Council from a jury-panel. And I should then invite you to explain to me how your scheme can be said not to encroach upon the judicial functions of the existing Court, when you would completely deprive them of all juridical attributions, and simply call upon them to find "Ay" or "No" upon a naked issue of fact.

WILB. I was unwilling, my lord, to interrupt the flow of your exposition, but I will now observe that none of these searching interrogatories can be rightly addressed to me. They are all founded on the assumption—which you did not wait for me to accept—that the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council would be *bound* to take their law from the Bishops, or rather bound to treat as law what

the Bishops lay down as doctrine; and that is an assumption to which my language gave no warrant.

WEST. What, Bishop! You would give your tribunal of doctrine a merely consultative voice? You would permit the lay judges to adopt or reject its opinions as they pleased?

WILB. I have already said that my object is to obtain an authoritative declaration of the true faith of the Church, and this would, under my scheme, be obtained independently of the decision of the Privy Council on the particular case before them. To recur to the instance I cited just now, the Judicial Committee might have decided that Mr. Gorham's book did not so categorically contradict the articles and formularies as to subject him to deprivation, but with this would have gone out the ecclesiastical answer that the Church of England taught that every rightly baptised infant was regenerate. Do you see any anomaly or inconvenience in that?

WEST. No, Bishop, I do not. Artfully concealed as it is under an assumption which you profess to repudiate it is invisible. You reduce the Judicial Committee to mere judges of fact, and then you rejoice at finding that no anomaly attends the reservation of the question of law to the Episcopal referees. But on that hypothesis, the Privy Council would not have exercised the power you pretend to allow them of rejecting the Episcopal statement of doctrine. They would simply have acquitted the defendant of the charge of having contravened it. But if the Judicial Committee are to have the right of declaring the law as well as

finding the fact, we must conceive it competent to them to have declared in the case supposed that "children are *not* made regenerate by baptism," and consequently that it was immaterial whether Mr. Gorham had contravened the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration or not. Suppose them to have so laid down the "law of the Church." Would that become "the doctrine of the Church," in the teeth of the declaration of your Episcopal referees?

WILB. God forbid!

WEST. Ay, but He must forbid something more if scandal is to be averted. He must forbid the Privy Council to maintain a declared heretic in possession of his benefice. Surely, Bishop, you must perceive your invisible anomaly and inconvenience now. A and B, two beneficed clergymen, are simultaneously prosecuted for heresy, upon two different points of doctrine. The Church, through its Bishops, declares her true doctrine to have been upheld in the teaching of A, and controverted in the teaching of B. Thereupon steps in the Privy Council, deprives A for his orthodoxy, and confirms B in his benefice for his heresy. And that arrangement you think likely to bring peace to a distracted Church! No, Bishop, there is one homely lesson which we poor Erastians have mastered, but which the most erudite of Bishops has never yet contrived to grasp. It is that, if two men ride a-horseback, one must ride behind. You cannot divide the spiritual jurisdiction from the temporal authority of an ecclesiastical court. They must remain in the same hands whether those be the hands

of the Church or of the State. The days are past when the ecclesiastical tribunal could find a heretic guilty by its sole adjudication, and then hand him over for punishment to the secular arm. Nowadays if the State is to be executioner it must also be judge.

WILL. What? Is the rule of the laity then to be absolute? Are we, the representatives of the spiritual element in our communion, to hold our peace altogether on matters concerning the most solemn verities of our faith?

WEST. Why not? It would be a wholesome discipline for week days. Besides, there is nothing to prevent you talking as much as you like in Convocation; though whether that is your notion of clear and unanimous utterance I know not. Nor do I know whether any such is to be found among you.

WILB. I told you at the outset, my lord, that it would be useless for me to discuss the question with you. We Churchmen, at any rate, recognise a "living voice of the Church."

WEST. And we laymen, Bishop, can distinguish at least half-a-dozen. There were nearly as many at the Reformation, and they had all to be listened to. The Church itself is founded on the policy of comprehension, and that is a policy which only laymen can administer.

WILB. Comprehension, my lord, may be carried too far by those who care not whom they include.

WEST. Any distance, Bishop, will seem too far to those who think that the hurdles are being opened at the wrong end of the fold. And "those who care not

whom they include" means simply men who show no preference for either end of the fold to the other: a class much more common, and, it may be, much more properly so, among the laity than among the clergy.

WILB. Nay, enlarge the fold at the latitudinarian end as much as you please, I say as a High Churchman: only let it remain a *fold*—a real inclosure and not a sham one, opening wide over its prostrate hurdles on to the bleak moorland of infidelity.

WEST. And enlarge the fold at the High Church end as much as you please, say I as a latitudinarian: only let it remain a *sheep* fold, not one whose hospitable gaps invite everywhere the entrance of the Roman wolf. But metaphorical controversy, my dear Bishop, is an idle game of battledore. The argument is as easily bandied to and fro as a shuttlecock, and has not much more weight. Shall we discontinue it?

WILB. As you seem from your choice of metaphor to charge me with Romanizing, most certainly. No man has denounced the errors and pretensions of Rome more unreservedly than I have.

WEST. And yet after all it is the very type of Church Government which you most favour.

WILB. Most favour? I?

WEST. To be sure. A Pope who claims to be the vicar of Christ is——

WILB. Popes hardly bear themselves as His vicars nowadays.

WEST. Pardon me. That is exactly how they do bear themselves, it seems to me. A modern Pope

behaves as Christ's vicar in the sense in which we speak of an English incumbent as being the vicar of his curate.

WILB. The wholesome purpose of that last sarcasm, my lord, will, I trust, procure forgiveness for its irreverence.

WEST. I trust so too. Elijah, you will remember, was permitted the use of irony in testifying against the Prophets of Baal. But what, to return to our subject, could afford a more perfect type of spiritual independence than the Church of Rome? There you have a "living voice of the Church" indeed.

WILB. A living voice, but not "of the Church." Hers was hushed for ever in 1869; and nothing now is audible through the silence of that vast communion, but the voice of a single bishop.

WEST. There is much to admire in your lordship's disinterested rejection of so attractive an ideal. And yet I have known English prelates who seemed continually striving to realise it.

WILB. The voice of the Church will in future mean the deliverances, ill or well considered, of a solitary Italian Priest.

WEST. So much the better, surely, if the Church has agreed to recognise his voice as hers. The solo has natural advantages over the chorus, if only that it leaves less doubt about the tune.

WILB. I cannot reply to ribaldry, my lord. Let it be enough to say that whatever be its merits, the form of spiritual government which prevails in the Church

of Rome is by no means to the taste—speaking for myself, at any rate—of English bishops.

WEST. Oh, as for the bishops themselves, I can well understand that. I thought we were speaking of the discipline of the Church at large. To really relish a Papacy from the point of view of the ruling ecclesiastical class, one ought to be Pope one's self. What your lordship would doubtless prefer to a spiritual autocracy of that kind would be a sort of right reverend Venetian oligarchy.

WILB. I am certainly of opinion that doctrines should be defined not by a single head, but by "the heads" of the Church, after full synodical deliberation.

WEST. Impossible. The heads would be by the ears in no time. This sort of episcopal Home Rule that you seem so much to long for, Bishop, would be found as unworkable in the ecclesiastical as in the political order, and would lead to just the same disagreeable alternative between resumption of the grant and the total separation of grantor and grantee. And you do not really desire a "Repeal of the Union" between Church and State, I am sure. You are loyal, I am persuaded, to the establishment which you so conspicuously adorned.

WILB. There, in truth, you do me no more than justice. How indeed could I be otherwise than loyal to the Church of Hooker and Andrewes, of Ken and Herbert—the Church which has enlisted the fervent devotion of so many saintly hearts, the reasonable service of so many powerful minds; the one Church of Christendom which has steered successfully the middle course between the despotism of authority and the anarchy of private judgment?

WEST. I must admit that it is pre-eminently the Church

of a gentleman, and a man of culture. But I feel sure that it would almost wholly lose its attractions in this respect and become narrow and sectarian if once it were separated from the State. Its Bishops, too, would probably decline in social status, and by consequence in their acceptability to the world of fashion.

WILB. Why do you address that argument so pointedly to me, my lord?

WEST. I must apologize for addressing an argument of so worldly a nature to your lordship at all; but you cannot, I know, be insensible to the consideration that high social popularity must greatly enlarge a bishop's sphere of usefulness, and that there is nothing unworthy of his Apostolic mission in courting it.

WILB. I know not, my lord, whether you say that in good faith or in irony; but, in any case, I hold it to be true.

WEST. Irony, Bishop! Never, I trust, shall I use that weapon so unskilfully, and I may add so profanely, as to blunt its edge against the informations of Holy Writ.

WILB. St. Paul was made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some.

WEST. Your lordship has anticipated my quotation. Social success is in this sense a proof of Apostolic succession, and was doubtless sought by you only for such evidential purpose. But be that as it may, the Pauline descent of your lordship's versatility was unmistakable, and it must indeed have been gratifying to you to reflect that the display of those accomplishments which so charmed our dinner-tables was indirectly tending to establish the validity of Anglican orders.

DE MORNY. GAMBETTA. BLANQUI.

DE M. Welcome, dear M. Gambetta, to the Shades: too soon no doubt for your ambition, but at the best of moments, perhaps, for your fame.

GAM. You should know me well, Monsieur, since you seem prepared to write my biography. The more should I apologise for not recognising you.

DE M. Oh, no apologies, pray. A face is easily forgotten in a score of years; and a young law-student fresh to his Paris need not have been very familiar with mine. As you see, and say, however, I well know you.

GAM. As well as the Fates knew me apparently; since you are pleased to approve of their decree.

DE M. The terms of my welcome appear to have nettled you. It is not unnatural. Politicians are actors, and have all the actor's qualities. They are as vain, as ambitious, as incapable of self-criticism, as irrationally unsatisfied with past achievements, as childishly confident of surpassing them in the future. When did ever actor think that the public had had enough of him? or that his powers were failing? or that his *rôles* were limited, and the best of them played already? No, my dear M. Gambetta, of course you think you died too soon. You would have been more

than the mortal you were proving yourself, if you had thought otherwise. Yet very few men do really die too soon for their fame, though hundreds live too long for it.

GAM. I am waiting to learn the name of my candid critic.

DE M. Forgive me if I divert myself a little with your guesses.

GAM. You must give me some clue then. Your language stamps your calling, and you yourself have fixed the period of your career. You were a politician of the Second Empire: so much I know. But how are you to be distinguished—excuse my frankness—from any other shallow cynic who flourished among the rank growths of that ignoble time?

DE M. By a most honourable distinction: as you at any rate should account it. A coincidence of official position has associated my name with yours.

GAM. With mine?

DE M. Indeed yes. You may think it impossible that you could have followed in my footsteps: but you did.

GAM. I cannot believe it. They would have led to no goal of mine.

DE M. I don't know that. They led to a devilish comfortable berth at any rate, and report said that you thoroughly enjoyed it. Why, you started for Hades from my house, and I am not sure that you did not begin the journey in my hearse.

GAM. Ha! . . . M. de Morny?

DE. M. At your service. How capricious is fame! To think that a posthumous immortality should have been

reserved for me as the predecessor of the great M. Gambetta in the Chair of the Chamber and the salons of the Palais Bourbon! I shall go down to posterity in your company; I, and my silver bath, which, *en attendant*, dear Republican, I believe you found to your liking.

GAM. M. de Morny! So this is the philosophiser on the vanity of ambition! But you were right, Monsieur. No one should know better than you that there are men who live too long for their fame—and for their country's welfare.

DE M. Candour of criticism seems to be as much your *forte* as mine. Pray indulge it if you wish. I retired from the scene of life, you may perhaps remember, in 1865. I gather that you consider that too late an exit. May I ask at what earlier date you think I should have been better advised to have taken my departure?

GAM. I know too little of your younger days, Monsieur, to determine that point with exactitude. Your death, for aught I know, might have been fixed with advantage to yourself and your fellow-men at a much earlier date than 1851. But you should certainly have died at some time before the month of December in that year.

DE M. For my fame, you mean?

GAM. And for your country's happiness.

DE M. My dear M. Gambetta, you would deprive me of my sole achievement.

GAM. What? you glory in your shame! But after all, why not? Infamy has always seemed better than obscurity to certain minds: and but for the crime of December who would ever have heard of you?

DE M. Or of you, my good friend? You are a little

ungrateful. I prepared the way for you. You will admit, I suppose, that it was the Empire which made you a possibility.

GAM. No doubt: but it is the first time I ever heard that the surgeon owed gratitude to the cancer. You prepared the way for me, as disease prepares the body for the knife. It was the thrice-accursed poison of your Empire, working in the veins of France, which begot those monstrosities of morbid tissue—the administration of Rouher, and the army of Lebœuf. For eighteen years the vocabulary of the hospital might have served for the sole language of politics. He who said "corruption" said "government;" and to say "government" has always been to say "France." For eighteen years of a vile existence the Imperial system had been converting our very life-blood into germ-cells of malignant growth; in 1870 it was draining the last drops of healthy fluid from the veins of the country to discharge it upon her body in the suppurations of prodigality and fraud. What wonder that it needed the scalpel of Von Moltke to extirpate it, and the cautery of the Commune to burn away its roots? Gratitude, you say? You are under a slight mistake, Monsieur. The founders of the Republic do not even owe you the thanks due from the physician to the "interesting case." You were not the patient, but the disease.

DE M. Let me congratulate you on a pretty piece of declamation. And now to the facts. That the Empire became corrupt, and, like most corrupt things, corrupting, is a fact: that it represented the principle of corruption is not fact but rhetoric. Judge it and me by what it was,

and not by what it became. Badly as it ended, it saved France from worse in its beginnings.

GAM. From worse? And what is worse than death-in-life?

DE M. Hell-on-earth: and that was the alternative régime. The "crime" of December, indeed! How like the hypocrite History, with her smug apologies for the thrice as cynical Cæsar of the ancient world! The "betrayal" of France"! And what was this France that we betrayed? A mastless, compassless vessel, hull down in a weltering sea of anarchy and rolling and plunging towards the reef of Revolution. We were right, as any men with heads and hands would have been right, to seize the helm.

GAM. What, Monsieur? like a band of mutineers and by the same methods? cutting the steersman's throat, and flinging your honest messmates in irons into the hold?

DE M. Steersman there was none; and our "honest messmates"—if so one should style that mob of greedy lawyers, garrulous journalists, and crazed ideologues—were wrangling for the wheel. Why should such knaves and imbeciles have been allowed to wreck so fine a ship?

GAM. To say nothing of the cargo. You were suspected, M. de Morny, of having thought of *that*.

DE M. Well, and why not? The labourer is worthy of his hire.

GAM. And the burglar of his booty, perhaps.

DE M. Ah, bah! We are men of the world, M. Gambetta: and we are neither of us in the tribune. Let us talk like what we actually were on earth, and not like

what you professed to be, and what I—well—had no opportunity of simulating.

GAM. Your proposal is an insult, Monsieur. I had nothing in common with you.

DE M. Ambition, daring, promptitude, perseverance, resource, are these nothing? They belonged to both of us. Each saw the prize before him, I in '51, you in '70; each saw it before him and needing but one clutch to grasp it. A coward would have drawn back from it; a theorist would have pondered, a rhetorician would have spouted, till the golden moment of capture had gone by; but we—

GAM. Stay! Add—in *your* case—an honest man would have turned aside from it.

DE M. Pooh! We are all honest—to ourselves: or sufficiently so at any rate to escape self-condemnation. We always mean well—nobody knows how well but ourselves; and we judge our own conduct accordingly. The All-knowing, the priests tell us, is the All-merciful, in virtue of his omniscience; and, being omniscient as to our private motives, our power of self-acquittal is naturally infinite. Other people, to be sure, we must take as we find them: and the limitation of our faculties may prevent us extending the same indulgence to them. But that is no reason why we should not exercise the blessed virtue wherever we can.

GAM. M. de Morny was not known on earth as so ingenious a speculator—at least in the philosophical sense of the word.

DE M. Men of action, my dear M. Gambetta, are seldom allowed credit for such reflective powers as they

was too busy making history to have time my share in it.

u would have done well, however, to have few hours now and then for the preparation ology. It would have saved you from much s misconstruction. You forgot, perhaps, that millions whose history was being so oblig- ade" for them had ample leisure to criticise , and that by the time the work was finished l be ready to overwhelm the artist with their ns.

By the time the finished work was spoilt by ls, you mean. Again I say the Empire was its beginnings; it was popular, imposing, strong. stige of the name of Bonaparte commended it storic vanity of Frenchmen; its splendours gratified te for luxury and their love of show. Our timid sie drew confidence from the contemplation of gth; our ignorant peasantry were charmed with licity, and hailed it as that rarity in their lives, lligible.

Then, indeed, must it have been a case of *corruptio pessima*. Do pray, M. de Morny, let us hear the of the miscreants who perverted this blessing to ning so strangely like a curse. History surely l preserve them for eternal execration.

M. History will trouble herself about nothing so ificant. And, besides, the men who discredited the re are familiar enough to *you*—that is, I mean the ich they belong.

GAM. To me!

DE M. Undoubtedly. Has it never occurr
dear M. Gambetta, that a man who seizes u
by a *coup d'état* may have formed as many c
connections as a man who wins his way to
organising an unsuccessful defence of his cour
an invasion. Both have to provide for their fr
both may have very mischievous friends to p
You take my meaning?

GAM. Your meaning, yes; your hints, no.

DE M. That is the simplicity of innocence.
domus sciet ultimus. The Empire perished,
M. Gambetta, of the disease which was so rapi
mining your own reputation when fate stepped i
you. It died of its parasites, as I always fore
it would when that feeble, good-natured, puzz
ruler, whom the gaping crowd mistook for str
cruel, and astute, was left without a voice to wa
hand to guide him.

GAM. No one could, indeed, mistake the m
which the Empire died; but you must forgive
fail to trace any of its symptoms in myself.

DE M. The subject is not an agreeable one, but
really ask you whether you were *quite* satisfied
reputation of your *entourage.* Incorruptible you
always knew you to be: the chief public man ir
is conventionally so recognised for the credit
country. He resembles in that respect the P
of the United States. But like that high functic
may have the knack of surrounding himself wi

he fragrance of the rose by living
call no one among your intimates,
whose name smelt somewhat less
nostrils than your own—no one who
n just the slightest whiff of stock-
ir of the doubtful army-contract?
e been base to desert friends in whose
onfidence, simply because they had
as to escape calumny. The more
y scandal the firmer was my resolve

us resolve, but an indiscreet one.
ur ideas, I may surely claim your
nperor. It was the same chivalrous
uprightness of his associates which

M. de Morny, or infatuation?
on belief in human nature was our

is irony.
which has led an unjust and unthink-
to us the corruptions which sapped
mpire in its closing years; and, do you
betta, I cannot but fear that the same
ill be placed upon your own career—
ill have to bear the burden of the sins

on that score. My own career will be
ly judged from the very fact that it
lenges comparison with yours. Your

Empire was the Eirenicon of all hc
all true servants of the people by
hatred for its name.

DE M. Is it indeed so, M. Gam
person of that well-tried servant o
see approaching, you will be able to

GAM. I fail to recognise his feature

DE M. At any distance it migh
were seldom seen on earth except t
a dungeon, and few but gaolers cou
with them. But they are those of
liberty; at least if thirty odd years
put sincerity to the proof.

GAM. It is M. Blanqui. I know h

DE M. Do you? Then, judgin
of his countenance, you have the ac
is it usual, M. Blanqui, for one frie
another with so fierce a frown?

GAM. Liberty, M. de Morny, is a
meanings as religion, and it sows as m
those who should be friends. I am a h
I know that but too well.

BLAN. For heretic say traitor, *M. l'*

GAM. *Merci bien, M. l'Intransigeai*
the correction? The two words mea
political dialect, we are all aware. I
we might with advantage borrow the
of that church which in fierceness of in
left so far behind.

DE M. *Hola! Messieurs les a*

Doucement! or the child of darkness will have to keep the peace between the children of light.

BLAN. Do not disturb yourself, M. de Morny, I have no animosities against individuals. My only foe, and I may almost add my only friend on earth, was an idea.

DE M. *Diable!* Then you chose them both with little judgment, *mon vieux!* For your foe found powerful backing, and your friend left you all your life in the lurch.

GAM. That ought not to surprise us when we recall the names of M. Blanqui's foe and friend. The one was Order and the other Anarchy; and until man quits the city for the wilderness, the conflict between those two combatants will ever be unequal.

BLAN. Better the wilderness, then, a thousand times! Better the blind injustice of nature than the organised oppression of men! The weak would at least perish by a swifter and more merciful fate.

GAM. I misnamed your foe, then, M. Blanqui, I perceive. You struck at something higher than Order. Your enemy, it seems, was Society, was Progress, was Civilisation itself.

BLAN. The deadliest of my enemies was human speech: the accursed frauds of naming, the ancient lies of language which for centuries have served the strong and betrayed the weak, armed the hand of the oppressor, silenced the cries of the wretched, lulled the conscience of the prosperous. Society, Progress, Civilisation, Order! Great God! that the miserable of every land and tongue, the millions who agonise that the thousands, the hundreds, or scores may enjoy, should have so long been stupefied by the muttering of that senseless incantation over their bed

of pain! Society! A band of brigands, a pack of wolves, a tribe of Thugs is a society to itself; and with as good a commission to prey upon the human race as cupidity, or ferocity, or fanaticism have ever conferred upon the present rulers of the world. Progress! progress is the chief characteristic of the car of Juggernaut, and the proudest boast of his charioteers! Civilisation is but another name for the more inordinate enrichment of the rich, and the deeper impoverishment of the poor; while as for Order, but no! I will leave the definition and the eulogy of that blessing to the principal author of the *coup d'état.*

DE M. My dear M. Blanqui, you really ask too much of me. I am a man of action, and out of my element in the region of the abstract. It is true I have assisted to "save society" and to "answer for order," but I greatly doubt whether I could define either process in a manner which would much assist M. Gambetta's argument. I should put it that to "save society" means saying to the "Haves," "Do you wish to keep your purses from the Have-nots? Then hand us over the State money-box, and we will guarantee them to you." As to "answering for order,"—well, that means saying, "Now we are comfortable—some of us. Let us alone, you others, or else . . .!"

BLAN. I applaud your candour, Monsieur, and wish that false democrats would imitate it. But to make it complete you should have finished your sentence. "Let us alone, you others, or else. . . ." Or else what? A firing party in a barrack-yard?

DE M. I think so. It is a more orderly way of vindi-

cating order than sweeping the Boulevards with the mitrailleuse, or pouring indiscriminate rifle-volleys among the tombs of Père-la-Chaise.

BLAN. I heartily agree with you. Your methods were more decent and humane than those of your successors, and, for my part, I think no worse of your cause. The "order" of the Empire is not more hateful to me than the "order" of the sham Republic.

GAM. Why not say at once that it is less so? It is no secret that the foremost place among M. Blanqui's hatreds was always reserved for the Government of the time being, whatever it was. To be an existing Government at all was its sufficient offence; or, rather, it stood self-condemned by the fact that it was not the Government of M. Blanqui.

BLAN. The sneer is worthy of its author. The charge of self-seeking comes well from the bourgeois Mirabeau, who, failing the genius of his model, could reproduce him only in his ambition, his treachery, and his lusts. It comes well from the political adventurer who, having attained to the position of a Rienzi, was content to live the life of a Barras. My own life is my answer to your taunt. I struck no blow save for the advancement of others, nor ever in one single enterprise sought power for myself.

GAM. I know it, Monsieur, and it is because I know it that I reply not to the rash calumnies with which you have sought to revenge my imaginary sneer. I am incapable of such an utterance, as you should know. If I did not believe in your sincerity, I should respect your sufferings. You were broken on the wheel of politics; and

a victim under the crow-bar of Sanson would not be more secure against any taunts from me.

BLAN. I want no compassion for those who had none for the miserable millions whom I served. And, accounting you one of the worst of their enemies, I reject your pity.

GAM. Then you shall at any rate have my justice. I meant to impute to you, not the selfish desire of gaining power for yourself, but the vanity of believing that no one but yourself could use it worthily.

BLAN. And where do you find proofs of that vanity in my life?

GAM. *Mon Dieu!* What a question! Your whole life was one continued proof of it, from boyhood to the day of your death. Against what Government have you not conspired? Nay, to what Government did you ever allow even a twelvemonth's trial before endeavouring to overthrow it? Stay; your pardon. There were *régimes* to which you granted a period of probation before striking at them. They were those that were established during one of your terms of captivity: those that found you the State prisoner of the Government which they had supplanted, and thought it best to let you serve out your sentence. The day and night of Republic and Empire succeeded each other, like the changes of light and darkness above your prison-roof, and you felt it not. But you never used your liberty save in one way. Your earliest battle with your enemy, the ruler, was fought, if I mistake not, when you were barely out of your teens. You lent your hand to the overthrow of Charles X. What day of grace did you allow to the Monarchy of July?

BLAN. Six months, and six weeks would have been time enough to unmask that vulgar fraud.

GAM. Good. You conspired against it in 1831, and the next six years you spent, did you not, within the walls of a prison? How you issued from it I must have heard, but do not remember.

BLAN. The imbeciles included me in an amnesty, as though, if they could forgive me my attack upon them, I could forgive them the betrayal of the people. But I was not long in showing them their mistake. They soon learned that I could strike again.

GAM. And you, that they could strike harder. Was it not so, Monsieur? . . . . . But I agitate you. Forgive me. I know that that second imprisonment of yours ——

BLAN. Ah, God! Those bitter years in Mont St. Michel! the gloom around me! the agony within!

GAM. Again I ask your pardon. It was cruel to awaken these painful memories.

BLAN. Not so; my weakness was but momentary. I am calm again. Why should I shrink from the story of my martyrdom? It is over, and I am at rest . . . . . You were right in saying that the July Monarchy taught me it could strike harder. It struck hardest of all my enemies before or since, for it struck me through another . . . . . It killed my wife.

DE M. Your captivity?

BLAN. No; hers. The world was her prison, as my prison was her world; and she died of beating against its bars—for entrance. We had been married but two years when I passed through the gates of Mont St. Michel; in

another year she began to droop and fade, in three more she—well, before the fourth year of my imprisonment passed she was dead.

DE M. You nearly followed her, however, I believe; for the Government, actuated no doubt by motives of humanity, did their best, did they not, to re-unite you?

BLAN. If so, their hearts hardened again towards the last. I was at the gate of the tomb and with my hand upon the latch when they removed me to Tours; and there the doomed Government of Louis Philippe ran a race with me for death and won it. The Revolution of 1848 threw open my prison doors once more.

GAM. And, like its predecessor, freed an enemy. You hastened to Paris to attack the new Government, and after a few months of liberty, to earn another sentence of ten years' imprisonment, which probably, however, was the means of saving your life. What think you, M. de Morny? The month of December, 1851, was not a favourable time, I think, for a revolutionary enthusiast to be at large.

DE M. My dear M. Gambetta, it was certainly an excellent time for a gentleman of those views to spend in prison. I say no more.

BLAN. You are mistaken, both of you. Had I been free at the time of the *coup d'état*, I should have remained a passive spectator of events. What interest had I in a struggle between King Stork and King Log? What cared I whether the bourgeois could keep his grasp upon the throat of the people, or whether the soldier got his foot upon the necks of both.

DE M. Little enough, no doubt. But, pray continue, M. Blanqui. You were due to society again in the year 1858, I believe?

BLAN. Why continue the recital, Messieurs? A life like mine must be monotonous even to hear of.

DE M. My desire for the remainder of your story is not quite disinterested, I own. I want to come to the period of the Empire, because, as one of the humble founders of that institution, I take some pride on reflecting that you regard it with greater approval than any of our numerous French Governments.

BLAN. With greater approval! I!

DE M. May not I believe so? It is true you contrived to incur a sentence of four years' imprisonment in St. Pelagie in 1861; but, I can myself remember that you were soon removed from your prison, and I understand that you remained quiet for some extraordinary period of time—at least seven or eight years. It would be a pleasure to me to think that I had assisted in any way to provide M. Blanqui's too active life with that short interval of repose. After all, the Empire, say what you will of it, was essentially a soothing *régime*.

BLAN. If you remember that I was removed from St. Pelagie you might also recollect that I was only transferred to the ward of a hospital; and you might have guessed that the seven or eight years you speak of were passed, not in the quietude of contentment, or even in the dull tranquillity of despair, but simply in the prostration of sickness. A life spent in prisons, M. de Morny, is healthier,

no doubt, than one passed like yours; but men do not thrive under it, and one must expect to require occasionally to recruit one's strength.

GAM. Moreover, M. Blanqui very fully proved that his inaction was enforced: as M. de Morny, if he were better acquainted with the events which took place after his departure, would be aware. The Empire did not escape M. Blanqui's overt hostility, even in the hour of its approaching end. For, if I remember rightly, he was condemned to death by default in 1870 for an attack on the barracks of the Pompiers.

BLAN. You are right; but in a few months the Empire fell and ——

GAM. You had managed to incur a second sentence of death for heading an unsuccessful rising against its successor. Two attempts against two successive Governments within a year. That was a remarkably expeditious performance, even for you, Monsieur.

BLAN. It was my last, however. That confederacy of *escrocs*, whom you call the Republic, discovered me two years afterwards, and for yet another seven years I rotted in its gaols. Nor did I regain my liberty, except to die. The foolish people, who have not the strength or courage to throw off their tyrants, had, nevertheless, the weak good-will to elect me their deputy; but it was an honour paid to a dying man.

DE M. Doubtless, however, it served you as a consolation in your last hours.

BLAN. I do not know. Is it better to die unhonoured and despised than that those we have tried to serve should

recognise and be grateful to us only when it is too late to help them?

DE M. I cannot assist you, I fear, to a solution of that problem. My own career supplies no example of either fortune. I obtained the recognition of my countrymen without their gratitude. But, then, I did not undergo your sacrifices to obtain it. Tell me, pray, how many of your seventy-six years did you spend in prison?

BLAN. Thirty-seven.

DE M. *Tu Dieu!* What a drollery of a penance after all! What a ridiculous tramp over the burning marl! Come, confess, *Messieurs les Esprits-forts*, that in ridding the world of the nettle-rash of religion you have left the fever of fanaticism untouched. How in the name of hair-shirts and knotted scourges does this modern fashion of self-torture differ from the old one? I doubt not, dear M. Blanqui, that you have had many a good laugh at that amiable but unpractical enthusiast, the late Père Lacordaire: and in truth his self-inflicted mortifications did lend themselves a little to profane ridicule. But for the life of me, I cannot see any less absurdity in your own choice of an abode and a career. What the devil was the magic of a prison that should make it so much more eligible a retreat than the cloister? As to your life there, I cannot see that it differed much from that worthy monk's. You practically took the two monastic vows of poverty and chastity as it was; for your occupation of conspirator provided sufficiently for the one virtue, and your gaolers, I presume, looked after the other. Except, then, for your invincible objection to take the third vow of obedience to anybody,

you might as well have been a religious devotee at once. Better, indeed; for you would then have been supported under your macerations and lacerations by the hopes of another and a better world.

BLAN. I *was* so supported, Monsieur. It is for the hope of another and a better world that the Socialist suffers. It is to leave such a world behind him that he lays down his life.

DE M. Behind him? Yes, I know that: but position seems to me to be everything in a matter of that kind. Moreover, the religious enthusiast is occasionally subjected to the tortures of doubt, and I don't see why the free-thinking fanatic of the humanity-creed should escape them. Mere denial of the existence of a God will hardly insure a man against doubt upon other subjects. To feel sure that there is no heaven above us does not of itself convince me that it is possible to create one here. Did you never have doubts, M. Blanqui, of the reality of that earthly paradise which the generations for whom you suffered were to enjoy?

BLAN. Is it in ignorance, M. de Morny, or in malice that you raise again that darkest phantom of my imprisoned hours? Ah! what were cold and hunger and bereavement, and yearnings for the speech of man, and the ache of recollection, and the stifling embrace of solitude, and the leaden monotony of the days—what were all these at any time, to the agony of that one doubting thought—How if, after all, the future should be reserved for the De Mornys and the Gambettas of the world, for those who crush the people and those who cajole them? It is true that to

believe so were to believe that the world is a hell, but—How do you know—that accursed phantom whispered—how do you know that it is not?

DE M. Precisely. That has always been my difficulty. I have never found it any easier to believe in the millenium of the Socialist politician than in the real thing promised us by the priests. Indeed, I always thought your creed the harder to swallow of the two. Anything might be possible to disembodied spirits; I never met with one on earth, and a heaven of harp-playing might be suitable to and prepared for them. I can only speak of the souls which I have had experience of in their bodily habitations; and never will I believe that the rogues, the fools, and the madmen whom I found these tenements almost invariably to inclose, are capable of constructing and maintaining that mundane Paradise in which M. Blanqui so heroically believed.

GAM. I do not imagine, however, that he will be much surprised at your scepticism, M. le Duc.

DE M. Nor perhaps at your own faith, dear M. Gambetta. The form of democratic godliness which you yourself practised was doubly blessed, and belief in M. Blanqui's ideal of the future was made easy to you indeed. During all your latter years, at any rate, you resembled those fortunate Christians who have the promise of the life which now is and of that which is to come. But M. Blanqui was compelled to "testify" under greater disadvantages; and he must have found it a tougher work to wrestle down his doubts in the prison cell than you need have found it in the Palais Bourbon.

BLAN. I would rather have faced them where I did. If

I had little there to fortify my courage, I met with nothing to unbrace my sinews. It would have been a greater feat for M. Gambetta to resist my temptations than it was for me. The Christian legend has this eternal element of moral truth beneath its historic falsehood, that the consciousness of suffering for others is a source of superhuman strength. But these are feelings, M. de Morny, which I do not expect *you* to understand.

DE M. Why not? There is no difficulty in understanding them. Neither I nor my successor in the Chair of the Chamber have ever failed in intellectual appreciation of your nobility of sentiment, though a different conception of public duty prevented us from yielding to such impulses ourselves. Is it not so, *cher confrère?* I feel sure that, even amid the splendours of the Palais Bourbon, you never lost your admiration for the heroic virtue of self-sacrifice.

GAM. For you I have no answer. To M. Blanqui, I will say that passive endurance is not the only, nor I will dare to add the highest, though it may be the hardest, service which a man can render to his cause. I laboured, Monsieur, for the ends for which you suffered, and, though with little hope of obtaining it, I claim your recognition as a loyal and faithful comrade.

DE M. So do I.

GAM. Your jest, M. de Morny, is ill-timed.

DE M. Jest, you call it? What does M. Blanqui say?

BLAN. I? I see no jest. Your cause, Messieurs, was identical, the exploitation of poverty by wealth; and I would as soon take the hand of the one as of the other.

DE M. You see, M. Gambetta, it is as I feared. Our

common labours for the public good are unappreciated. But perhaps we ought not to wonder. From the point of view of the Irreconcilable, the harder we have worked the worse our offence. With the intolerance of his school, M. Blanqui insists on the condition that the object of our toils should coincide with his. Energy alone is not to save us; and indeed it has perhaps occurred to our veteran *revolutionnaire* that for the matter of mere industry, apart from its direction, nothing ever came up to the Rue Jérusalem.

GAM. I am not surprised that M. Blanqui should confound us in a common condemnation: I expected nothing else. But before the tribunal of history our cases, never fear, will be distinguished. The *régime* which I helped to establish may pass away like your own. Its faults may be as manifold, its career as short, its end as sudden. But dream not that the historian of the future will fail to credit the founders of the Third Republic with an honest desire to secure the liberty, the rights, and the general happiness of the French people, or that he will hesitate to brand the projectors of the Second Empire as a knot of cynical speculators trading on the fears of the nation for their own selfish ends of advancement.

DE M. All depends, *mon cher*, upon who has the writing of history: but in my own humble opinion, there is very little chance of your being saved, if I and my friends are thrown overboard. There won't be much room for a "centre party," I suspect, in the days that are coming: and if one of M. Blanqui's heirs doesn't get hold of the historian's pen and transfix us both with it, it will probably

fall into the hand of a Reactionary, who will compliment both Empire and Republic upon that for which M. Blanqui curses both. The founders of both will obtain a common apotheosis as Saviours of society.

GAM. What? with no allowance for the difference between the two Redemptions? You, Monsieur, were "Saviours" by the crucifixion of others, and we—

BLAN. And you, the same! Do you fancy that the crimes of 1871 have not effaced the memories of 1851? You nailed the people to the cross: at least, your party did, yourself consenting. You, we recollect, Monsieur, were a witness of the scene from afar off. You did not appear on Calvary till all was over; but you came in good time for the parting of the vesture.

DE M. I fear M. Blanqui is right. We both of us carried the principle of vicarious punishment a step further than our Divine Model, and in doing so brought it to a point at which its application will never be popular. At any rate, we can neither of us expect the sympathy of M. Blanqui, whose attempts at the redemption of humanity were of the original orthodox type. I think, however, I can perceive a reason why he should regard myself and my career with a less active dislike than he feels for you and yours. I, as he knows, am no believer in mankind, and never was: you, M. Gambetta, are or profess to be. And since M. Blanqui deems you no less the foe of humanity than myself, he must necessarily hate you with that additional bitterness which flavours our detestation of a traitor. Indeed, if I remember rightly, it was by that agreeable title that he accosted you when he

interposed in our instructive colloquy. Was it not so, M. Blanqui?

BLAN. It was. Traitor is his true description. And I did not call things and persons by their right names for seventy years on earth to drop the habit now.

GAM. I have already told you, M. Blanqui, that I consider you a privileged person. Even your shadowy ideals were not more baseless than are your reproaches, but your fidelity to the one has fairly earned you license for the other. Yet, alas for France! who has suffered more from the revolutionist than the reactionary—more from the most devoted of her friends than from the most rancorous of her enemies.

DE M. What a convenient abstraction is the name of one's country! Where among reactionaries—meaning, I suppose, the friends of strong government—do you find your "enemies of France"? No one, I dare swear, could have been a more ardent lover of France than I was. I adored her as the favourite alike of Bacchus and Cytherea, the birthplace of the choicest wine, the home of the most fascinating, if not the prettiest, women that the earth produces. As to Frenchmen, indeed, that is another matter. But Jacques Bonhomme is not a bad fellow if he is properly managed. I like him, in fact, a little better, if I despise him a little more than I do the rest of the foolish race to which he belongs. The animal has pace and spirit and showy action, along with his devil of a temper. He only needs a rider who understands him, who does not fear him, and who will not humour him to the point of weakness. And while I lived he had it.

GAM. Your estimate of your own powers seems a highly flattering one, M. de Morny.

DE M. Pooh! it is the facts that flatter me. Has any one been able to sit him since? If so, how comes it that the political course is dotted with the discomfited jockeys who have made the attempt? As for you, M. Gambetta, you who were lifted into the saddle amid the cheers of the crowd, what sort of business did you make of it? Why, you began by admitting that you could not ride the brute without a new patent curb of your own invention, and when you found that that was not to be had, you dismounted after the first canter to escape being thrown.

BLAN. True, M. de Morny! Quite true! It was a moral unhorsement of the most dishonouring kind.

DE M. You will now, perhaps, find it less difficult, dear M. Gambetta, to comprehend the unpleasant terms of my greeting. I told you that you had joined us too soon, perhaps, for your ambition, but not too soon for your fame: and surely I was right. As it was, you were enabled to leave behind you the tradition of a great capacity which had never been fully tested, and you will live in history on the credit of hypothetical achievements which were really beyond your powers.

GAM. Your taunts, Monsieur, come easily to you, and no wonder. Death is your confederate in silencing their confutation.

DE M. Malign him not, *cher confrère!* Believe me, he was your truest friend. Can you look at the France of to-day and doubt it? I cannot. I would not, however, be unjust to you; I allow your infinite superiority to the

puppets whom you manipulated in life, and whose wires have been spasmodically jerking of themselves ever since you departed. But you surely cannot believe that their failure is wholly due to themselves. Candidly, now, do you really think that if you yourself had lasted another twenty years you could have enabled your precious Republic to last as long? Did you even think it strong or flourishing, nay, reasonably secure at the hour of your departure?

GAM. My position between you, Messieurs, is certainly an unfortunate one. Opposed as you are, I might have thought that whenever I offend the one I should at least conciliate the other. But while one denounces my opportunism as treachery, the other, it seems, will allow it no merit as policy. No, M. de Morny, I did not think the Republic either strong or flourishing, or even secure when my hour came to be called away. Had I thought it so, I might have pursued a course which would not have exposed me as an Opportunist to the taunts of M. Blanqui.

BLAN. I should equally have denounced you.

GAM. That I doubt not, good apostle of intolerance; but it would have been under a different name. My ideal of a Republic would never, I fear, have been fortunate enough to coincide with yours. But as it was I never had the time or chance to realize my own ideal. I was forced to submit—or rather my very opportunism consisted in submitting—to a consciously imperfect realization of it, in order to educate the masses of my countrymen to accept it one day in a more perfect form.

DE M. Ah, the old story! Phrase-makers and formulists,

the whole crew of you! Excuse my frankness, M. Gambetta, but this talk of yours appears to me to be the merest jargon of the tribune and the lecture-room. Whom in France were you "educating," and in what? Your endeavour was to found a Conservative Republic, and you claim, I suppose, to have been educating the peasantry to accept its Republican form, and the workmen of the towns to acquiesce in its Conservative complexion?

GAM. I do; and what is more I claim to have completely succeeded in the first half of my task already.

DE M. *Blague!* The one class needed no education from you, and the other would never have learnt your lesson. The peasantry will accept any *régime* that shows itself capable of lasting for a couple of years, and which promises to continue. Strength and stability, or rather the appearance of the strong and stable is all they crave, whether it presents itself to them under the name of Republic, Monarchy, or Empire. As for the workmen, you were no more educating them into Conservatism by your policy than the hunted Russian traveller who flings his children to the pursuing pack is educating wolves for domesticity. The whole of your later career was a continuous flight before the Reds, who bolted at a mouthful every sop to anarchy which you threw out to them, and still pressed on.

GAM. It is the common delusion of the Reactionary to suppose that every ruler is at heart a reactionary himself —that he shares his own ignoble fears of the people and thinks of nothing but how to purchase their continued favour by the same vulgar expedients. But I, Monsieur,

knew how to resist the people as well as how to humour them.

DE M. Yes; to resist them in trifles in order that surrender in greater matters might wear an air of independence. For in what policy of the slightest importance did you dare to oppose them? Come, my good M. Gambetta, speak frankly; you are among friends, or, what is the same thing, if not better perhaps, opponents who have no power to harm you. *L'ennemi c'est le cléricalisme.* Was that precious *mot* the free and unforced expression of your own opinion? And was it out of Christian charity pure and unqualified that you emptied New Caledonia, and invited home again the survivors of that party with whom you had your little difference in the streets of Paris?

GAM. The Church was infect with Imperialism and Legitimism from end to end.

DE M. Legitimism you could have laughed at; and if the sympathies of the Church were with Imperialism so much the more imperative was your need of winning her to your side. Besides, how came she to be Imperialist? Do you suppose that there is any natural affinity between a priest and a Bonaparte? You know that there can be none. But the temporal friendship of Rome is to be had by any ruler who will guarantee to her her spiritual dominion, and both Bonapartes were wise enough to see that it is better to have her for a friend than a foe. When, then, the founder of a Conservative republic declares war against the most powerful Conservative organization in the country I must regard him either as incompetent in the

selection of his political instruments, or as no free agent in their choice. And seeing, M. Gambetta, that I never doubted your political capacity, I have no hesitation in adopting the latter alternative. You were shrewd enough to see the advantage of allying yourself with the Church, but not strong enough to risk the alliance. In this as in everything else you were the helpless tool of those whom you professed to command. Throughout your whole career as leader they were pressing you steadily onwards towards the gulf of anarchy. The only difference between you and your successors is that they are a little weaker and move a little faster than yourself. I see the most certain signs of the approaching end—a Budget more inflated than that of the Empire, a desperate endeavour to amuse the country with idle foreign wars. Yes, the heirs of M. Gambetta are preparing the way for the heirs of M. Blanqui, as surely as the quickening seed contains the promise of the ear.

BLAN. You are right, M. de Morny! I know it! I feel it! It is my ever-present consolation.

DE M. Make the most of it then, my worthy friend, for the heirs of M. Blanqui will in time prepare the way for the heirs of M. de Morny as surely as the corn-blades ripen for the sickle.

GAM. Not so! Not for ever! Our country is not doomed to wear out her life in the accursed mill-round of Reaction, Revolution, and again Reaction. In the faith that it will not be so even M. Blanqui and I are, I hope, at one.

BLAN. We are, Monsieur. No one can yearn more

passionately than I for the escape of France from what you will call an "accursed mill-round"—the stern realities of despotism varied by the miserable counterfeit of liberty. I long for the real Revolution which will sweep away both oppressors and impostors, both De Mornys and Gambettas into the common rubbish-heap of the past.

DE M. *À la bonne heure!* And while you two, the dreamer and the intriguer, persevere thus merrily in your work of mutual throatcutting there will always, thank God, remain a future for a man of spirit, who knows how to lay you both by the heels, and to make his own fortune out of the gratitude of the sensible fellows who want to sleep quietly in their beds. His opportunity is fast coming round to him. Would I were back again on earth to seize it!

GAM. It would not have come round in my lifetime if the Fates had granted me but a few years more. I had yet a work to do for France which would have earned for me the unchanging loyalty even of that daughter of caprice. Shall I name it?

DE M. You need not. I read *la revanche* in your face. You are a gambler, Monsieur, like all successful Revolutionists. But did you never weigh the stakes of that tremendous *partie* and count the risk of losing?

GAM. Often, and with ever-strengthening resolve to dare that risk.

DE M. And yet you have had heavy accounts to settle on a former game. There are many thousands among us here who could remind you of the bloody follies of the Loire, and of the hosts that melted away round the beleaguered capital like the snows that received their blood.

GAM. Where are they that I may greet them? You shall see what sort of welcome those gallant souls will give their chief.

DE M. No doubt you need not fear a meeting with *them*. As Frenchmen they were fighting for their homes, and as soldiers the poor devils were too ignorant to know how recklessly their lives were wasted. But to sacrifice, not your thousands but your hundreds of thousands, and to sacrifice them not to repel an invasion but to establish a dynasty, or what is worse, perhaps, to secure a lease of power and popularity for a single life—that is another matter. *Dame!* I am no milksop, and I have had many a disagreeable interview with my victims—the victims, I should say, of a mutual misunderstanding—in the winter of '51. But I have seen that unfortunate Louis pass, with his boy beside him, through the shades of his slaughtered soldiers, the harvest of Gravelotte and Sedan, and I do not feel sure that I could preserve my composure before the silent witness of those innumerable accusing eyes.

PLATO AND LANDOR.

PLA. Say no more, my friend. I have long forgiven you the affront.

LAN. Forgiven me! . . . Zounds! I must correct him in that. I will submit to no such indignity even in the Shades . . . . You have misunderstood me, O Plato. I asked no forgiveness for anything I have written concerning you. What I have just said was meant but to assure you that, poorly as I think of your dialogues, I bear you no personal ill-will.

PLA. I never provoked the ill-will of any one; and as to my writings, I am indifferent to the opinion of a barbarian.

LAN. That was well said, and I take no offence at it. As a Greek, you would naturally despise my judgment on such a matter, and I, as an Englishman, should despise you if you pretended to defer to it. I lived my whole life among men who were barbarians to *me*, and I never stooped to solicit their suffrages.

PLA. Barbarians, to you a barbarian? You speak in riddles. But stay! I remember. I have heard men talk of you as a Greek.

LAN. "Born out of due time." An inapt expression, to my thinking, borrowed without much attention to propriety from St. Paul.

PLA. How is it inapt? It seems to me appropriate.

LAN. The Greek spirit is immortal, and no man's birth into its service can be an anachronism. A Greek cannot be born out of due time; but he can be born devilishly out of due place, saving your presence: and that was the case with me.

PLA. You seem then to be bringing a charge against your country rather than your times. In what respect, O exile from Hellas, were your countrymen barbarians?

LAN. Do not, I entreat you, indulge in satire. It is the one form of intellectual energy to which your genius seems to have been least adapted. Nothing, as I have already told you, can be more frigid than the raillery of your dialogues.

PLA. Let me ask you then, without satire, in what respect were your countrymen more barbarian than yourself?

LAN. In every element of distinction between barbarism and culture. One-half of them were Persians in everything but the taste for philosophy, the other half Scythians in every habit but that of nomadism. Pleasure was the sole pursuit of the one and pursuit the only pleasure of the other.

PLA. Surely, my friend, you are describing them—these last, at any rate—in the language of metaphor.

LAN. Not at all, I assure you. The English country gentleman does not dwell, indeed, in a wheeled house, or drink mare's milk; but, for the destruction of life, or the endurance of fatigue, I would match him against the toughest Scythian hunter that ever cooled his dusty feet in the Tanais.

PLA. That your countrymen are of a more than Persian luxury I can believe. I have heard as much, indeed, in converse with those of them who have most lately joined us. But they are no longer as tasteless in their profusion as they were wont to be. So, at least, I am informed.

LAN. Your witnesses must have been fortunate in their experience then, or you unfortunate in their incompetence. My own inquiries confirm me in a directly contrary belief.

PLA. Of whom then have you inquired? I have again and again been told that the literature of Athens was never so assiduously studied, nor its art so ardently beloved, as among your countrymen to-day.

LAN. Pedants and dilettanti we had always with us. We were never to seek in the learning of Greek particles; and as for our love of Greek art, we proved it long ago by a sincerer flattery than even that of imitation.

PLA. You mean by——

LAN. I mean by spoliation. Our passion for Athenian marbles is at any rate indisputable. We are collectors of them as Cacus was a collector of oxen. But it is eighty years since we did homage to Athene by pillaging the Parthenon, and I may well ask for some newer examples of our Hellenic enthusiasm.

PLA. You seem to be ill acquainted with the latest changes which the manners of your country have undergone. The language of Athens, they tell me, is no longer the study of the scholar alone, nor the monuments of ancient Greece his exclusive care. An explorer of the vestiges of our earliest history is greatly honoured by your

whole people. Not only, again, do they study the Athenian drama, but they endeavour to represent it. Do you not know that both the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus and the *Ajax* of Sophocles have been lately brought by them upon the scene?

LAN. I do know it; but I doubt whether *you* can have heard of their last piece of masquerading in this kind. You have? Then what think you of it? Aha! You are confused.

PLA. I do not understand you.

LAN. I suspect you understand me but too readily! My countrymen have been corrupting the political education of their youth with a scenic representation of Homer.

PLA. Your merriment is incomprehensible to me. I have nothing to unsay in my teachings.

LAN. Of course not. What philosopher ever had?

PLA. I think the same of the poetic mythology as I ever did; but from all I can learn of this people of yours it would be impossible for them to stray further from the paths which I marked out in my *Politeia*, than they do at present.

LAN. There, by Jove, you are right. Gold, silver, brass; Rulers, Guardians, Producers, they have all wandered pretty far a-field. But excuse me if I decline a discussion on this subject. I have written enough about it to offend you already.

PLA. Be it so. But whatever the vices of the Homeric gods and heroes, you will admit, I suppose, that those who represent their doings in the dramatic

form intend to do honour to Homer. Or shall we say that . . .

LAN. No, let us not say so. I know what this style portends, and I beg you will spare yourself the trouble of these elaborate preparations. I am no sophist to need all the dialectical bird-lime you are for spreading in my path. On the contrary, I will walk without ado into any trap you please to set for me.

PLA. I say, then, that these barbarian choragi seem to be seeking in quite a new fashion to do honour to the poetry of Greece. Neither, as I hear, were they pedants or triflers who lately distributed the parts and taught the chorus. At the head of them was the first of your philosophers, as I at least am bound to think him.

LAN. The first of our philosophers! Who? Where? When?

PLA. I mean the chief of your Academy.

LAN. Of our Academy? Ah! I perceive your mistake. An academy in my country is anything but an abode of philosophy. It is an assembly of artists; and he whom you supposed to be the first of our philosophers, is in reality the official chief of our painters.

PLA. He is at any rate, then, neither pedant nor trifler. It is the pure charm of Greek poetry which must have attracted him.

LAN. Yes, or a sense of the picturesque in Greek costume; that seems to me motive enough from the painter's point of view. But the women would take care that that element of the matter was not neglected.

PLA. The women?

LAN. Oh, I was forgetting; you are perhaps unprepared for such a scandal. The female parts in these Homeric tableaux were performed by women, the wives and daughters of the actors.... Compose yourself; I will not pursue the painful subject further. But you may now, perhaps, begin to doubt whether the beauties which the performance was designed to exhibit were those of Homer.

PLA. The chief beauty of Homer is undraped simplicity.

LAN. So it was of the Homeric damsels, I am told, at the late representation. I can understand the Hellenic enthusiasm of young and pretty women, and their devotion to a cause in which a graceful figure may be so effectively and liberally displayed. Upon them, no doubt, the performance has exercised a most improving effect. The drama, however, is meant to educate, not those who act in it, but those who witness it.

PLA. And were not the benches crowded with applauding spectators?

LAN. What if they were? You know not the nation of whom you are speaking; or, rather, you are unaware that you are not now speaking of any "nation" at all: no more than I should speak of Poseidon if I were to say Aphrodite. The ocean of our Democracy is unfathomed, and these idlers are but the foam on its surface.

PLA. But are not the tastes of your wealthy and

cultivated citizens an index to the tendencies of the whole people?

LAN. For the sake of your illusions I hope not; for if so the tendency of the whole people is towards a most contemptible levity.

PLA. Yet the studies of which we have been speaking appear to me to be serious.

LAN. Serious studies may be pursued in a frivolous spirit; and they are so when they are taken up as a mere relief from more honest and undisguised frivolities.

PLA. And is it only thus that your wealthy citizens are studying the poetry and drama of Greece?

LAN. I will answer that question by another. You seem to have often conversed with new comers from my country. Have you ever heard any of them let fall the name of Jumbo?

PLA. I do not remember to have done so. The word is unfamiliar to me. Yet, stay, I seem to recall it. Is it not the name of a barbarian god?

LAN. Associated with Mumbo it is. By itself it is the name only of an idol; but of one which for several weeks, I believe, received the homage of the most highly civilised community in Europe.

PLA. Explain yourself more clearly.

LAN. It would not be worth while. Suffice it to you to know that the nation in whom you take such interest have no more become votaries of Homer than they have become worshippers of the elephant. The drama and poetry of Greece take their turn in our world of fashion with the latest singer, the latest traveller,

the latest murderer; and they will be thrown aside in their turn for some newer novelty of vacuous minds.

PLA. I am persuaded, my friend, that you think too ill of your country and its manners. You judge of it from your own remembrance of it alone. But do you find no change for the better in those among your countrymen who have the most lately joined us here? Do you not find them more studious of the things of the mind than they were wont to be?

LAN. Of what things of the mind? Of those which relate to science or to art? If to science, yes. But I thought we were speaking of art.

PLA. We are, and it was art I meant.

LAN. Then, no! I cannot say so. I have found it quite otherwise.

PLA. What? Do they not send us more poets? Do they not send us more painters?

LAN. Ay, truly; they send us any number—and all of them immortal. It is true they are a little difficult to distinguish from each other. The poets seem to have written all their poems with a paint-brush, and the painters were apparently unable to complete their pictures without the pen. But what has this to do with the things of the mind?

PLA. Much, surely; unless poetry and art among you have ceased to be an exercise of the faculties according to a law of right reason. Have they?

LAN. I would rather let the painters answer for themselves. But as for the poets, I do not feel justified in associating the name of reason with many of their

performances; nor, exceptions excepted, can I even think of them in connection with the idea of "law."

PLA. Do you mean that they reject the supreme authority of reason as a guide and moderator in their compositions?

LAN. I mean that they not only reject but insult it. A poem by one of these poets is either a riot of the imagination or a mutiny of the passions; and Reason would present herself there with as much rashness as an unpopular magistrate at a tumult among the cobblers. They would pelt her from the scene with rotten adjectives.

PLA. You are, indeed, describing a lawless and licentious class of men.

LAN. In matters of art they profess to be, as they call it, a "law unto themselves:" a pretension than which none could be more alien from the orderly and reverent spirit of the Greek.

PLA. No, indeed. And yet your account of these men surprises me; for I had heard that the chief of your younger poets has rivalled the greatest of our own poets in the tragic drama.

LAN. It is true, and of him I would fain say nothing. I had his reverence, and he has my admiration. However widely he may seem to have departed of late, and in some of his compositions, from the antique model, his genius will bring him back again in the end. It is of others—others of a newer and weaker school than he—that I have been speaking.

PLA. Yet even these express reverence for Greek art and for the Greek spirit, and I doubt not feel it.

LAN. It is impossible, O Plato, that you can have met any of them, or you would never think so.

PLA. Nay, I have been in their company more than once.

LAN. And failed to convict them of imposture? Perhaps, then, it *was* all Socrates. There may be something in the Boswell theory of the Platonic Dialogues after all.

PLA. I cannot hear what you are saying.

LAN. I was merely repeating to myself a passage from one of the Homeric hymns. But let us return to these friends of ours. I shall for ever remember my first encounter with one of the tribe. Shall I relate it to you?

PLA. It would greatly interest me to hear it.

LAN. He had just landed at the wharf among a boat-load of (apparently) his admirers. Dis and Persephone! What countenances! Never can Father Charon have ferried over so woe-begone a crew. I felt sorry for the worthy old man, he seemed so dispirited by his company. But the passengers were nothing to their coruphaios.

PLA. What then was the aspect of the man?

LAN. It would need the genius of an Aristophanes—and his vocabulary—to do justice to it. He was of about the middle height, but reduced below it by a stoop. The length of his hair might have proclaimed him a Spartan, were it not that one saw he could have come of no race which follows the practice of exposing its sickly children. His visage was long even to prolixity; his mouth semi-hiant and unalterably sad. He had the eyes of a dolphin and the legs of a Strymonian crane.

PLA. Apotropaian Apollo! Avert the omen! And you, my friend, refrain from unlucky words! What should this portent threaten?

LAN. Nothing worse than tediousness; reassure yourself. I approached and greeted the new-comer, mentioning to him my name. He said he had passionately longed to see me; and he looked, indeed, as if he had been passionately longing for something. But he added that he was glad to see me; and he did not look as if he was glad of anything.

PLA. What was the cause of his melancholy?

LAN. He was lamenting that there should be no better bread than can be made with wheat. Ah! I see you do not know them. These men, O Plato, are perpetually bewailing the shortness of human life, and saying unkind things about death; protesting against that cosmic sadness which they are continually hugging to their hearts, and complaining of the shortness of those pleasures which they seem to enjoy like a stomachache.

PLA. This is a strange condition of mind which you describe. Death, we know, is a terror to the vulgar, and pleasures are unsatisfying to those who pursue nothing else. But the wise man is above both fear of the one and care for the other.

LAN. The wise man? Yes: but no one ever thought that these men had any philosophy to support them. But of what use to them is art—art of which the end is joy? These men to call themselves Greeks! Is it Greek to be for ever pulling a long face at Pan and begging him to leave his piping and answer riddles? Is it Greek to

have no sense of a soul of immortal gladness in all things? Greek, to whine eternally over human destiny and clamour fretfully to the Powers who have ordained it?

PLA. These young men seem indeed to have little reverence for the gods.

LAN. They reverence nothing. They have neither that nor any other quality of those Greeks of whom they prate. Their minds are—but why speak of their minds? Their art itself exposes them for pretenders. For what were the chief virtues of the art of Athens in its greatest period? Were they not simplicity, manliness, repose, reserve?

PLA. You are right my friend. I should so enumerate them.

LAN. Then how stand the writings of our pseudo-Hellenes as regards these qualities? Let us have done with their poetry. Do you know their prose?

PLA. Nay, how should I know it?

LAN. How? Did you not say that you had conversed with some of these men?

PLA. Yes.

LAN. Then you have heard their prose. You cannot have escaped it. What did you think of it?

PLA. It certainly seemed to me to be wanting in moderation.

LAN. Moderation? Never in the history of literature has there arisen so dissolute a prose. Luxurious excess, a supra-feminine love of softness and splendour, is its inseparable and predominant mark.

PLA. They claim, however, to show taste and discrimination in the adornment of their writings.

LAN. They do: and I allow their claim. But what then? Having discovered new dyes, and having acquired new cunning in the beautiful arrangement of colours, they fail to see that an inordinate passion for the kind of pleasure which such arrangements give is in itself a sin against the continence of Art. A Persian grandee was probably a beautiful sight enough; but if a satrap of Xerxes had apparelled himself as these men bedizen their prose, the king would have beheaded him for his effeminacy.

PLA. You easily dispose, then, of their claim to one of the virtues you have mentioned. They are wanting in manliness.

LAN. They are; and in the simplicity which is seldom found apart from it. As for repose, how in the world can a man remain at rest who is for ever longing to draw attention to the grace of his attitude or the lace of his tunic?

PLA. There is still the virtue of reserve.

LAN. Reserve is restraint, and restraint is painful, and pain is intolerable to the self-indulgent. When did one of these men ever deny his senses the pleasure of a glowing epithet, however more appropriate would have been a colourless and neutral word?

PLA. I cannot, indeed, approve of their manner of discoursing either upon the painter's or upon the sculptor's art.

LAN. Men cannot discourse fitly upon one matter when

they are thinking of another; and these men compose their dissertations not so much to set forth their subject as to display themselves. But it is not from vanity alone that they neglect to castigate their style. An over-coloured diction is the natural product of a too sensuous imagery, and with this they indulge themselves rather for their own gratification than for that of their readers.

PLA. But do they not understand that in this pleasure as in all others, they should observe a rule of temperance?

LAN. No doubt they do, like all other voluptuaries; but they are the least fitted of all men, both in spirit and in training, to resist this species of temptation. They may fancy themselves Greeks to their hearts' content; but in truth they can trace no descent from classical antiquity at all. They are the late-born children of the Renascence, and their only real affinities are with the thoughts, the passions, and the foibles of that unreposeful time. Whatever sincerity there is in them displays itself only in their sympathy with its art, its poetry, its ideas. Their Hellenism is a sham product, redolent of that modern and modish suburb in which its latest festival was held.

PLA. But was there not formerly among you a more sincere culture study of the poetic models of my language? I have heard your countrymen speak of certain older poems inscribed *Hellenica.*

LAN. Indeed? Then they are better known in the nether world than upon earth. And what, O Plato, was the report of them?

PLA. That life alone was wanting to their beauty; but

that, lacking life, they could not without a paradox be credited with the promise of immortality.

LAN. I need not ask you who said that. I could trace the vapid epigram to a hundred flippant tongues. I doubt not that there were coxcombs who pointed the same dull jest at the Zeus of Phidias. None are so ready to award or deny the palm of immortality to others as those whose wits have rotted before their death. And pray what more did they say of me?

PLA. Of you, my friend? Was it you then who composed the poems of which I spoke? Had I known it, I would have gone more circumspectly. The writings of poets are like children, whose uncomely features are not to be spoken of but with reserve to their parents.

LAN. The simulation of ignorance as a cloak for insult is a modern refinement of malice, and I would never impute it to the courtesy of a Greek, and still less to the gravity of a philosopher. The poems of which you spoke, O Plato, were my own. They may well have been unworthy of your approbation, but believe me, they were far less so than their censors.

PLA. You are acquainted then it seems with those who condemned your poems.

LAN. Intimately. Their names were Envy, Ignorance and Vulgarity, three closely-allied enemies of every worthy work and workman in art or letters; and in a semi-barbarous society like that of England all other voices are drowned by theirs. I was well aware that in my own lifetime—but why pursue this subject? It is repugnant to me to speak of myself and of my labours; and especially

so when speech may be mistaken for protest against a judgment which I never recognised, and appeal from a tribunal before which I refused to plead. Let us rather speak of the writings of my successors, and of those among them—for there are some such I admit—who have striven to preach the Hellenic worship of perfection to the benighted. Scythians and Persians of my rudely luxurious land.

PLA. Have there then been other *Hellenica* produced among you?

LAN. Your question proves to me, O Plato, that you mistook the purpose of my poems and lent, perhaps, too ready an ear on that account to the fribbles who condemned them. A direct and avowed imitation of Greek models in a modern tongue can never be more than an elegant exercise of ingenuity. As such, it may succeed or fail. It may simulate life with more or less of cunning—though it will always seem inanimate to those who must be bawled at before they hear, and pummelled to make them feel. It may catch the happy union of the beautiful with the chaste—though its purity will always seem insipid to those who find in the raddled cheek of the courtesan their only ideal of beauty. But it can never live with the life or thrill with the passion of the present; and it is not by such exercises of the literary handicraft that the example of Hellas can be made helpful and inspiring to a modern literature.

PLA. How then would you call it to your aid?

LAN. A certain priest of our religion has told us that the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life. It is by

informing the ideas, the imagery, the expression of the moderns with the Hellenic spirit; it is by cultivating the Hellenic passion for symmetry and balance, the Hellenic pride in continence and self-restraint, the Hellenic delight in pure beauty of form, and the Hellenic contempt for the glare of colour, that the elevation of our literature is to be compassed; and there are some still living,—there is one in pre-eminence, by whom this excellent work has been greatly advanced.

PLA. In poetry or in what other species of composition?

LAN. In poetry for the most part, though he has endeavoured with less success to inculcate in his prose the precepts which he practises in verse. Has any one ever spoken to you of the *Strayed Reveller* or of *Empedocles on Etna?*

PLA. I do not recall those titles; but I have heard many such as a prelude to recitations, together with others far less familiar to me as a Greek than the name of the Sicilian philosopher. I am indebted indeed to your poets for having enabled me to make the acquaintance of not a few personages famous, it would seem, among the men of your own day, but completely unknown in mine.

LAN. The poet, however, whom I am praising is not one of those who seek to gain a character for erudition by the choice of obscure subjects. He is endowed, moreover, with that saving gift of humour which though it does not indeed save men from vanity, yet insures them against its more ridiculous excesses.

PLA. But are not these poems of your countrymen

direct imitations of Hellenic models? The title of one of them would lead me to suppose so, and did you not just now speak of such compositions as profitless exercises of the ingenuity?

LAN. They are not, however, of that description. Neither in scheme nor treatment can they be traced to any antique original. For their subject and their scene alone is their author a borrower from the legend or the history of your race; since the spirit which pervades them is not among those possessions of mankind which can be lent or borrowed. It must be imbibed as of native right, or as the privilege of the naturalised; and to those only is it vivifying to whom the grace of Apollo has granted the spiritual franchise of your soil. There is no "borrowing of the Greek spirit," as some men loosely phrase it, for any but these adoptive sons of Hellas. As well might one believe that the inspiration of Castaly could have been brought down to the dwellers at the foot of Parnassus by any one who chose to dip an amphora in the chance-discovered spring. For those alone were its waters magical whom the god had guided thither up the devious mountain paths and through the blinding thickets to bend knees of reverence upon its marge and to touch its sacred surface with prayerful lips.

PLA. Has the poet of whom you speak been indeed so highly favoured? Does he really sing as one who has drunk of the fountain of the Muses?

LAN. His poetry is instinct with the grace and soothes us with the repose of your most perfect art; and though in form it is chastened to the utmost severity of the

statuesque, there can be few—and I should despise them—who have ever found it cold.

PLA. By Zeus, my friend, it would almost seem as if the poets of Hellas might well have gone to school to barbarians whom you thus extol.

LAN. You are again, O Plato, unhappy in your irony. The Greek of antiquity has mastered the secret of perfection in literary form; and in one department of thought—the philosophic—we can add little or nothing to the work which he has accomplished. But in all else,—in the interpretation of human affairs, in the ordering and elucidation of the facts of nature, and in the deeper analysis of human feeling,—the cultivated modern might indeed throw open a school to receive him. I would have you to know that in these things the most learned and highest endowed Greek of antiquity would be a child in our hands.

PLA. I cannot restrain my surprise, that a race whom you only lately pronounced to be barbarians should produce such a paragon of taste and culture. How comes it that he has not Hellenised his countrymen, or has he been so satisfied with the contemplation of his own excellences as never to have attempted it?

LAN. As a teacher I own he has been less successful. The qualities in which he shines as a poet appear somewhat to fail him when he descends,—or ascends one would say with more propriety,—from practice to precept.

PLA. I am now, my friend, in very truth perplexed. It is indeed incomprehensible to me that one of those to whom you have bidden me go to school should lack the aptitude for teaching. Such a misfortune as

that can rarely have befallen so highly qualified an instructor.

LAN. The hit is a fair one; and I allow that there was some want of prudence in my mode of meeting your challenge, or at least in the particular form of words in which I accepted it. But you do not need to be told of course that the most accomplished of artists is not always the ablest of teachers; and the most classic of our poets assuredly gives testimony to that truth.

PLA. Wherein then does he fail as a teacher?

LAN. I cannot better answer that question than by recalling your admired reply to the censure of Diogenes. Stamping rudely upon the carpet of Eastern fabric with which the floor of your abode was covered, "Thus," cried the Cynic, "do I tread upon your pride, O Plato." "And with greater pride, O Diogenes!" was your just and dignified retort. In pronouncing judgment upon the faults of his countrymen, our apostle of culture has too often merited a like rebuke. In his descriptions of himself as a modest seeker after truth, there is something too much of the pride that apes humility. He praises the noble *naïveté* of the "grand manner" in language which seems a little too conscious of its own elegance; and he preaches simplicity in a style which is by no means free from affectation. That grace of the nude which distinguishes his imaginative work gives place in his criticism to a picturesque, but too minutely studied, arrangement of drapery; and while his poetry has always affected me with the charm of pure English, I often find it hard to tolerate the Gallicisms of his prose.

PLA. I hope, however, that these defects are not serious enough to reduce him even as a prose-writer to the level of those whom you have been describing. So great an inferiority to himself as a poet would make one doubt whether he had really drunk of the sacred spring.

LAN. If that is your only doubt you may dismiss it. Compared with the posture-makers of whom I have spoken his worst affectations are simplicity itself. He has, as I have assured you, the root of the matter. His Hellenism is a living reality; theirs, I repeat, is a sham.

PLA. Why, then, is its falsity not detected? Have you no recognised standard of excellence, no immutable tests of truth in the poet's work, and in all other work?

LAN. No, we have neither these, nor the desire for them, nor the belief in them. You called me a barbarian just now, and I applauded you. Do not imagine from that that I take the Athenian at his own valuation; it is the calm assurance of its accuracy, the haughty confidence of Athens in the absolute perfection of her models, in the eternal sufficiency of her standards, which I admire. Given that confidence, she needed only to place her models and standards under the charge of faithful custodians who protected the one from mutilation and the other from debasement.

PLA. There, my friend, you are in error. We had no such officers at Athens. The models and standards of which you speak were guarded, even as they were approved and adjusted by the citizens themselves.

LAN. And they, O Plato, were the custodians of whom I spoke. In a small community, favoured alike by nature

and institutions, it might well be so. The climate of Attica gave brightness to the mind of the Athenian; his polity provided him with education, his slaves with leisure. It is little wonder and no mighty credit to him that he should have duly profited by such a concourse of advantages. He did so profit by it, and the invisible canon of excellence in art and letters, found, therefore, as safe a depository in the bosom of the citizen as the legal standards of weight in the coffers of the Acropolis. But if the State at large was your tribunal of experts, so much the better for you. At any rate you let none but the properly qualified ascend the judgment-seat, and the barbarian in mind, if not content with a place on the benches, would have struggled with the ushers in vain.

PLA. You surprise me. In what other art or handicraft among your people does the worker submit himself to the judgment of the ignorant?

LAN. In what art or handicraft does he not? In the greatest of all arts he certainly does. In politics we have long since shaken off the tyranny of competence, and to-day in my country any man is a political expert who has clergy enough to make a cross on a ballot paper.

PLA. How then does your State subsist?

LAN. By the grace of the gods. The English democracy is the most remarkable in the world. It is at once the strongest and the weakest, the fiercest and the tamest, the least instructed in the learning of books and the most highly trained in the discipline of life. None was ever so studious of liberty yet so submissive to control; none so angrily intolerant of remediable hardships and yet so

sanely and so nobly patient under those which nature has imposed.

PLA. To what is this happy balance of their tendencies to be referred?

LAN. I know not. I know only that it exists, and that the unbroken tranquillity of our country attests it. The subversive impulses of this people are the superficial ones: their Conservative instincts lie deeper; but we know that they must be there. Westward through the Hellespont, and eastward through the Pillars of Heracles, the surface-currents both from the Euxine and from the Atlantic pour perpetually into the Inland Sea; but the waters of its basin keep their bounds, and they must needs, therefore, be depleted, through one channel or the other, by the back-set of some deeper-flowing stream. Even so is it with the democracy of England. It is for ever being fed full through the twofold inlet of Teaching and Circumstance; yet the shores of our society remain unwasted, and the rocks of our Constitution still lift their heads above the waves.

PLA. Among such a people there must be some inbred principle of obedience, and it should be easy to educate them to perceive what is beautiful as well as what is just.

LAN. The fault is not in the nation but in its circumstances. It is as docile in its tastes as in its politics, but there are none to direct it in either. Wealth and luxury have debauched one set of guides, as faction and ambition have corrupted the other.

PLA. Whom then do you call their guides in matters concerning the Beautiful?

LAN. The rich, the highly-placed, and the leisured among their fellow-citizens.

PLA. But do not these require teaching themselves in order to know what to study and admire?

LAN. They do, and they are unteachable: there is the whole mischief.

PLA. To the former, the wealthy class, you surely do injustice. Their very willingness to be led in this matter of Hellenic studies is a proof that you do. To show such willingness is to have already gone half-way towards perception of the Beautiful.

LAN. Let us join them, O Plato, in devoting the son of Telamon to the Eumenides. For no man ever destroyed so many potential percipients of the Beautiful in a single day.

PLA. Among the Trojans?

LAN. No, among the sheep: who surpass all other animals in willingness to be led. If docility to guidance is to serve for an augury of future taste, it must at least be intelligent. A blind and blatant scurrying in one another's footsteps gives no more promise of capacity in the human than in the ovine species; and I deem it no matter of boasting for the silly troop that they have been started by the chatter of some coxcomb, instead of by the jingling of a wether's bell.

PLA. But if then, my friend, you find your countrymen so unteachable in the humane life, would it not be better to abandon the attempt? Other nations will be found to hand on the torch of Hellas, if yours should lose the honour of the office.

LAN. Yet it is this office before all others which I have coveted for her: it is for a service such as this that I would have her remembered by the future world.

PLA. It is not in the power of all nations to preserve their memory among those that come after them. Many great empires have passed away from the earth without leaving any trace behind.

LAN. So will not ours. Most widely, O Plato, have you missed my meaning; except for courtesy I should smile at your mistake. The name and the works of England will endure as long as those of Hellas and of the conqueror of Hellas, whom, with no unwarranted self-praise, we boast ourselves to resemble. England has given laws to a dominion wider even than that of Rome, and has spread her language and her customs among millions over whom the Roman eagles never soared. She has "imposed the wont of peace" upon I know not how many savage or divided races, and its arts and virtues have sprung up in a hundred regions heretofore unfriendly to them, under the shadow of her shield.

PLA. Why, then, are you not content with these titles to the remembrance of mankind?

LAN. Because they are too splendid for any nation to remain content with. Achievements as great as ours have never failed to leave behind them aspirations vaster than themselves. Those who have surpassed the work of the Roman may well be fired with the ambition to rival that of the Greek. Moreover you should remember, O Plato, that in proportion to our control over the destinies of mankind, is our debt to the human mind and

soul. At present, however, we are in no way to discharge it. I own, indeed, that when I measure in imagination the span of our conquests, I am unable to rejoice over the wealth of outward prosperity which they have conferred; for I can think only of their tremendous deductions from the aggregate of inward happiness throughout the world.

PLA. Deductions! You surely can only mean that they have not increased it.

LAN. Not so, they have diminished it. Wheresoever in the world a people has passed under the sway of England, their lives, in becoming more abundant, have ceased to satisfy their ideals. We have broken in upon the secular calm of ancient and outworn civilisations, and over minds which once reposed in a passive and incurious contentment we have cast the spell of our own unsatisfied longings. The savage whom we tame unlearns his simple delight in Nature, and gains access only to our coarser and viler pleasures in its stead. We have peopled one whole continent with our lank-jawed kinsmen, and fringed another with the careworn faces of our sons. A full half of the globe's surface is given over to the melancholy Englishman—with his sombre attire, his repellent manners, his gloomy worship, his mechanic habitudes of toil. The human instinct of self-preservation will not long tolerate such a dominion as this; the human yearning after gladness will rise up in rebellion against it, and we are bound therefore in common prudence to seek the Hellenic spirit and ensue it, reverently striving, if haply it may admit us to its inspiring visions of the beautiful, and yield up to us the secret of its immortal joy.

LORD BEACONSFIELD AND SIR ROBERT PEEL.

LORD B. Surely I cannot be mistaken! Sir Robert Peel.

PEEL. Your countenance seems familiar to me, but I cannot at the moment connect it with a name.

LORD B. The name, perhaps—that is, the later name—will be less familiar than the face. Disraeli you knew in the flesh: of Lord Beaconsfield you can only have heard.

PEEL. Mr. Disraeli—I beg your pardon, Lord Beaconsfield—you are greatly changed in appearance. . . . . And not in the least improved. As outlandish-looking as ever.

LORD B. Age, Sir Robert, has doubtless found more points for attack in my exterior than it could discover in yours. . . . Prim respectability is immortal and unchangeable, or the English would not be the race they are.

PEEL. Time has certainly been busy with you, my lord, since we last met on earth.

LORD B. He is indeed the most reckless of Radicals, continually destroying without a thought of replacement.

PEEL. Yes, and like the Radical, or those who borrow from the Radical, habitually representing destruction as

merely change. "Time has greatly altered you," says one man to another: meaning by the euphemism, "he is killing you; he has visibly broken up your health; I see death in your face." And just so it is that under the soothing phrase of "constitutional change" we seek to disguise those collapses of political health, or it may be those treacheries of the political physician, which portend the dissolution of States.

LORD B. Dear me! These are not the figures with which you were most familiar in the other world, Sir Robert. Forgive me for doubting whether you manipulate them with the same success. Even as metaphors, indeed, I think they overshoot the mark. Surely we need not waste so much admiration on the transforming magic of Time, when we recollect how often he has been outstripped by politicians metamorphosing themselves. He "toiled in vain," for instance, after the illustrious but instantaneous convert from Protection to Free Trade.

PEEL. And he seems to have striven as vainly to correct your audacity, my lord. One would scarcely have expected that last taunt from the opponent of a £7 franchise in 1866, and the creator of household suffrage in 1867.

LORD B. Why not? Glass houses? My dear Sir Robert, pray reflect. The stones have been flying for fifteen years. I have not a single unbroken pane left.

PEEL. You seem to be but little disturbed by it.

LORD B. Who would be? What man of sense was ever disturbed by the charge of inconsistency? What damage did it ever do, or deserve to do?

PEEL. This is not the language of 1846.

LORD B. Nor are these the circumstances. You might as well accuse me of inconsistency on that account. It is the business of the politician to adapt himself to circumstances; and the sham virtue of "political consistency" is only another name for the blindness which misses facts, or the stupidity which misinterprets them, or the obstinacy which resists them. I find it hard, I say, to conceive of a statesman of the first class who could be even momentarily moved by the accusation of inconsistency; while as to suffering torture under it, as to permitting it to prey upon the health and spirits, as to allowing one's days to be darkened, and one's life, perhaps, to be shortened by it —I am sure you will agree with me, Sir Robert, that such weakness as that would be a sure sign of inferiority of character. . . . . You are silent. You seem troubled. I hope you do not dissent.

PEEL. No; I do *not* dissent. I accept your statement as correct, but I must construe its language strictly. To dread a charge of mere inconsistency would be weakness indeed. But dishonesty, but treacherous desertion of political comrades, but sacrifice of principle to place—accusations such as these, my lord——

LORD B. Amount to precisely the same thing. I am surprised that so experienced a party politician should make so little allowance for the rhetoric of party.

PEEL. The rhetoric of party! Of Party! You do yourself injustice. The satiric gift of Mr. Disraeli was never dedicated to such narrow uses. His sarcasms, he no doubt felt, were "meant for mankind;" and he launched them

first, for choice, at those members of the human species who happened to stand in the path of his advancement. The rhetoric of party! If ever personal motives inspired an attack, if ever pique and vanity, rancour and ambition combined to animate invective, it was——but enough. I have no wish to offend you, and to speak my whole mind on such a matter might possibly give offence.

LORD B. Not at all. I beg you will continue. I am a new-comer here, you know, and I have a direct interest in ascertaining how long one's animosities may be kept alive.

PEEL. You are mistaken, Lord Beaconsfield, if you suspect me of any such feelings towards you. I am even willing to admit that I may in some things have done you injustice. We never understood one another.

LORD B. "We never understood one another," is usually the self-flattering gloss for "I could not make head or tail of you." Do not think me discourteous if I decline to associate myself with your failure. I can understand that I may have puzzled you; for there have been others whom a nature of singular simplicity appears to have equally mystified. But I think I may say without presumption that your own character had no secrets for me.

PEEL. I did not desire it to have secrets for any one. But I may question your personal ability to interpret it. I cannot think that our political lives were guided by a common principle of action.

LORD B. Explain yourself, Sir Robert. I know I need not expect to hear the parrot cry of "Adventurer!" from a man of such liberality as yourself. You will leave that

for the tongues of disappointed dukes. Superior as were some of your advantages to mine, your ascent to the leadership of the aristocratic party was, no less than my own, the triumph of a middle-class adventurer.

PEEL. If I were not proud to own it, I should have too much pride to deny it. I should be the last to taunt any man with not having been born to the position which he fills. But honours may be won under different circumstances and by different arts.

LORD B. The justice of your remark, Sir Robert, shall excuse its lack of novelty. You would, however, have put your meaning with more point and precision, if with somewhat less delicacy, had you said that honours may be honourably and dishonourably won, and that mine were——

PEEL. I do not deal in such unmeasured language: nor would it become me to apply the word "dishonourable" to any career which the English people has deliberately selected for honour. But I need not be taken to pass any moral verdict upon it in insisting that it was very differently inspired from my own. How came you, for instance, to take the Conservative side in politics?

LORD B. How do most men choose the party to which they attach themselves?

PEEL. The word "choose" is itself not very happily chosen. I do not know that there is or ought to be much choice in the matter.

LORD B. Indeed? Would you then exclude all young men from political life with the exception of those who happen to be either the eldest or the dullest of their

families? For no one can be said to have no choice as to his political party except either him whose opinions have become fixed by mature years, or him in whom they have been determined by family obligations, or him, lastly, who has had too little activity or force of character to do more than acquire them by a process—fraught indeed, with tender associations from another field of human development, but applied with less propriety to the nutriment of healthy political tissue—the process of imbibition.

PEEL. You misunderstand me. To maintain that a man should have no choice as to his political party, is not to say that he should defer entering public life until his opinions are unalterably fixed.

LORD B. You feel, I perceive, that that would be condemning too many of us to a private life.

PEEL. It would be enough that any man seeking entrance to Parliament should feel compelled by present conviction to range himself on the side of this political party rather than that.

LORD B. And not upon the side of neither? You would then extinguish the breed of "independent members," who, I own, are a great nuisance.

PEEL. By no means. I have as little liking for the species as you have, but it has a perfect right to exist, and it is the offspring of conviction, not of choice—at least in the objectionable sense of the word.

LORD B. What *is* the objectionable sense of the word? For I confess you are puzzling me a little now. You would have every man take his place either as a Conservative, because his own Conservatism impels him to do so; or as

a Liberal, because his Liberal faith will not permit him to do otherwise; or as an independent member, because his conviction that he is wiser than both of them is irresistible. But this is surely an exhaustive renumeration of political species. Obscurity was not among your faults of expression, Sir Robert, but, for the life of me—if that ejaculation is still permitted to us here—I cannot guess who they are to whom you object.

PEEL. My obscurity is in this case a tribute to good manners. I find it difficult to express my meaning inoffensively.

LORD B. Your difficulty itself is not of the most flattering kind for my feelings.

PEEL. Of that I am fully sensible, and I will at once put the matter plainly. I have no liking, then, for politicians who choose their party as Dugald Dalgetty chose *his*, that is to say, with an eye to profit and promotion, and in indifference, positive or comparative, to the merits of the espoused cause.

LORD B. Are there such politicians?

PEEL. Do you really know of no one answering to the description?

LORD B. I can hardly suppose you to be thinking of the lawyers. To them indeed it applies exactly; but I have never thought of them as politicians at all, any more than as inventors because they occasionally conduct patent cases, or as physicians because they have sometimes to pick up medicine enough for the cross-examination of a medical expert. They cram politics as they would mechanics or toxicology, and no one ever supposed that

they care any more what views they adopt in the one science, than what theories they uphold in the others. It is perfectly well understood that if the prospects of Conservatism appear most promising at any given moment, or if the Liberal party happen to be over-wigged, the rising barrister will be full of enthusiasm for the throne and the altar; while if the state of parties is reversed, he will burn with equal ardour in the cause for which Hampden suffered on the field, and Sidney on the scaffold.

PEEL. The lawyer is the privileged Swiss of politics, and the man of whom I am thinking was not a lawyer. Come, my lord, we need not fence with one another here, and the aged Earl of Beaconsfield can afford to answer truly for the youthful Benjamin Disraeli. Did you not "choose" your party, as you express it, as a trader chooses the town or the street of the town in which he will carry on his trade? "Here and not there is the better opening; here, not there, is the greater demand for my services; in this quarter rather than that shall I be secure against competition."

LORD B. Do you mean then to suggest that my political professions of faith were insincere?

PEEL. Not all of them, certainly, for you professed and felt the strongest possible belief in yourself, and in that faith I know you never wavered.

LORD B. But my political theories? Do you decline to regard them as honestly formed and held?

PEEL. They were far too vague and uncommitting to allow you to plead their sincerity in proof of your own.

Any man can boast of fidelity to principles which need not compromise him with anybody; their very vagueness removes all temptation to disavow them. You borrowed something from the creed of every party, and from out of scraps of the jargon of each you composed a sort of "Abracadabra" of your own. The author of the "Revolutionary Epick" could always have allied himself without inconsistency with an extreme Revolutionary party, just as the author of Mr. Disraeli's political romances could have found ample warrant in them for throwing in his lot with the Tories. I am willing to grant that you may have had a certain amount of sincere sympathy with both parties, and if your final adherence to the Conservatives had been determined by a preponderance of sympathy on that side, I should have nothing to say. But was it so? Ask your own conscience.

LORD B. It is not in the habit of waiting to be asked before replying to a question of that kind. I had no idea, Sir Robert, that you had so grievously mistaken the meaning of my career as to suppose that it was shaped in its beginnings by sympathy with any opinions. Its shaping influence was antagonism—a sincere hatred which I had always felt and consistently expressed, and which my approving conscience assures me to have been my determinant motive at the turning-point of my career.

PEEL. Your conscience is liberal in its approval of motives; but I allow that a sincere hatred would have explained your action in '46 more worthily than my own reading of it. I cannot credit you, however, with an honest detestation of myself. It was the manifest simulation of

your righteous wrath against me which rendered it so odious in my eyes and in those of my sympathisers.

LORD B. It distresses me to hear you say so. Pray let us get from persons to principles, or at any rate to classes. With regard to them indeed, I may at any rate lay claim to consistency. In which of my romances, or in what speech which I have ever delivered, can you find anything but an implacable hostility to the commercial middle class—to the manufacturers and mercantile capitalists who succeeded to the political influence of the territorial aristocracy in 1832? For them I had never a good word; in *Sibyl*, in *Coningsby*, in the *Two Nations*, you shall look for any such word in vain. For them and for the self-seeking designs with which I believed, and in great measure still believe, them to have taken up the Free Trade cause—for the men with the cry of "Cheap Bread!" on their lips, and the whisper of "Cheap Labour!" in their hearts—I had the deepest and most disinterested repugnance. And it was not till you stood forth as their representative that my enmity against them took a form of apparent animosity to you.

PEEL. Whether apparent or real, Lord Beaconsfield, it was not reciprocated. I say again that I feel no animosity towards you and never did. You will do me the justice to remember that I showed none, either at the time of our encounter or afterwards. I will leave you to determine why. But in all my personal records of my life you will not find your attacks upon me so much as mentioned. My diaries preserve complete silence on the subject.

LORD B. An interesting fact, indeed, and your clear

recollection of it makes it all the more impressive. It shows at once that the silence on which you pride yourself must have been a genuine manifestation of indifference, and not a forced simulation of disdain.

PEEL. I do not pretend to indifference. I felt your blows acutely, I will not deny. But imputations upon character can be met with dignity in only one of two ways: by instant disproof, or by persistent disregard. It was impossible from the nature of the case to refute such charges as yours, and it would, therefore, have been unworthy of me to resent them. I was content to refer the issue between us to the judgment of the good and wise among my countrymen.

LORD B. It was a stately resolve, Sir Robert, and one eminently befitting a character for which, believe me, I have always entertained a sincere respect. Such appeals to the national justice and virtue are most laudable. The appellant in such cases, however, should be careful to do one thing.

PEEL. And that is?

LORD B. To live till the cause comes on for hearing. Appeals of this sort fall unfortunately under the lawyer's rule, that *Actio personalis moritur cum personâ;* and in politics there is no Lord Campbell's Act to mitigate the operation of the maxim. You recollect Lord Campbell, Sir Robert, though not, perhaps, by his title. Yes, you would just remember his rise. A most interesting study, though a Scotchman—perhaps because a Scotchman. Quite the Wedderburn of the nineteenth century.

PEEL. I recollect him; but you were about to say—

LORD B. I was about to remind you that you committed the error of dying before your cause came on. In the case of Peel, appellant, *versus* Disraeli, respondent, judgment went by default in the respondent's favour.

PEEL. It is not so. History will do me right.

LORD B. History? Oh! that is another matter. That is a court in which we can all of us get whitewashed. There the advocate disguises himself as a judge, and the worse one's case is, the more eager he is to advance his reputation by taking it up. But I thought your appeal lay to the popular tribunal. What I supposed you to be looking for was a *vivâ voce* recognition, so to speak, of your political integrity, and your great public services; not such approbation as history whispers in the ear of the student, but such as resounds throughout an empire in the voice of national acclaim. I imagined that it was your ambition to live, not in the dead annals of the chronicler, but in the daily discourse and cogitation of living men.

PEEL. Well, and am I so utterly forgotten?

LORD B. By the professors, no; by the people, yes. No statesman's name is more rarely on their lips than yours. Even the Liberals, who owe so much to you, neglect your memory. Seldom, indeed, did they mention you in my later life-time, except it was to sharpen some blunt-pointed taunt against me. And since my departure I have superseded you even as a whetstone. It is no longer Peel, but Beaconsfield, who is held up to the political world as the example of wise and statesmanlike Conservatism. I, the adventurer, the charlatan, the un-English! Widely as we differ on many subjects, Sir Robert, we might find a point

of contact here. So ludicrous an illustration of the value of the thing called "public opinion" might unite us, merely as men of the world, in the sympathy of contempt.

PEEL. To find your enjoyment in it one must have your cynicism, and I have it not. To me the fact is melancholy and ominous—far more so than what you tell me about my own unremembered name. I had ten times rather that the people should have forgotten me than that they should have forgiven you.

LORD B. Yet why? Both acts have their origin in the same defect of faculty; and neither deserves more praise or blame than belongs to mere shortness of memory. Amnesty, after all, is only the Greek for forgetfulness.

PEEL. Ay, but there are political sins — if there are not political services—which merit an eternity of remembrance.

LORD B. No doubt: but they don't get it. Practically there is but one inexpiable sin in politics, and but one way of atoning for the expiable. You blundered, Sir Robert—excuse my freedom—you blundered more than once in your policy; but the stumble most fatal to your posthumous reputation was that of your horse on Constitution Hill. I, on the other hand, had I committed far more errors than you did, should have atoned for them all by that one consummate stroke of statesmanship—the completion of my seventy-fifth year. Nothing, depend upon it, is more politic than longevity. Its effects may not be so startling and brilliant as are produced by the "early death of promise;" but they are infinitely more assured and lasting.

After all, it sooner or later occurs to people that the young Marcellus might have turned out a failure. But if one is not to die in the first blush of political youth, it is essential to last well into the seventies. Once the attractions of adolescence have been lost, one is bound to live until the dignity of old age has been won. The hurried departure of a sexagenarian, in the full freshness perhaps of some political reverse, has a touch of the ludicrous about it, like the premature farewell of a middle-aged prima-donna under the discouragement of a bronchial attack. It is wanting alike in discretion and in romance.

PEEL. If statesmanship is to be tested by tenacity of life, you have left a greater statesman behind you.

LORD B. I admit it with regret. He has at present surpassed my political achievements by two years—for the difference in our ages is too slight to matter. But our cases are exceptional. Our antagonism took so dramatic a form at last, that our reputations react upon and support each other, and the memory of the dead statesman is in a certain sense perpetuated by every characteristic act of his survivor. My own humble merit is to have lived long enough to fix that idea of dramatic antagonism in the public mind—to have established myself as the typical opponent of that form of Radicalism with which Mr. Gladstone's name is associated.

PEEL. That *form* of Radicalism? Yes, the expression is a well chosen one. Radicalism proper, you mean, as distinguished from Tory Democracy.

LORD B. I congratulate you, Sir Robert, on the correctness of your vocabulary. Under serious disadvantage you

seem to have kept yourself well abreast of the terminology of the time.

PEEL. You overrate the achievement, my lord. Tory Democracy is not quite the modern affair, even in your hands, that you seem to suggest. Your romances familiarised us with the idea, if not with the name, of the thing, and when the malice of Fate permitted you to dispose of the future of our country, the full drift of your youthful theories was made plain to the dullest mind. *Sibyl* and *Coningsby* may have shrouded their meaning under rhetorical phrases, but there was no coy concealment about the "Representation of the People Act, 1867."

LORD B. I did not venture to hope that that legislation would be to your taste. Your own policy was essentially pedestrian. You were not capable—forgive me, we have all of us the defects of our qualities—you were not capable of the statesmanship of the imagination.

PEEL. No, thank God!

LORD B. Resignation perhaps would be a more becoming mood than gratitude. There *is* a statesmanship of the imagination.

PEEL. I do not dispute that for a moment. I could not, with such a professor before me.

LORD B. Yes; and the unimaginative variety stands related to it as astronomy—

PEEL. To astrology?

LORD B. As astronomy of the pre-Newtonian to astronomy of the post-Newtonian era. Imaginative statesmanship is simply another name for statesmanship armed with the power of scientific prediction. In 1867 it was possible

to compute the—but you smile. May I ask to be admitted to the secret of your amusement?

PEEL. I was smiling, not at the scientific statesmanship of 1867, but at its contrast with that of the previous year. The Newton of politics, whoever he may be, must have arisen, laboured, and departed in the parliamentary recess of 1866. But surely your "leap in the dark" must have vividly, if not quite pleasantly, recalled the memories of twenty years before. Surely it must have awakened recollections of that performance of my own in 1846, of which you were the most unsparing critic.

LORD B. It did indeed, but by way of contrast rather than comparison. Leaps should be taken, according at least to the best traditions of the hunting-field, in company with one's horse. The most conspicuous feature in yours was, if you will excuse my saying so, that you left your steed on the other side of the hedge. I, on the other hand, succeeding to your seat, on the self-same animal, contrived—but why pursue a comparison which must be painful to you?

PEEL. Nay, I will complete it myself. You put your horse, you would say, at a still bigger fence than the one he had refused, and you "finished the run" on his back.

LORD B. Exactly.

PEEL. I do not deny it. I never did deny the superiority of your jockeyship. And if that were all, if a statesman owed no other duty to his country and his conscience than to outwit his political opponents; if the achievement of a party triumph by the shameless adoption and the reckless extension of an adversary's principles is to—

LORD B. Pardon my interrupting you, Sir Robert; but your information upon posthumous politics, excellent as it is for the most part, is in this instance at fault. You seem to be confusing the parts in the drama of 1867. The principles which you describe as "shamelessly adopted" and "recklessly extended," were not my adversary's but my own; while, on the other hand, the party manœuvre was not mine but my chief's. I was not the proselyte of Democratic Toryism but its missionary—the "educator," as I preferred to call it, of the Conservatives in the doctrine and practice of that faith. It was I—as you flatter me by remembering—I, and not Lord Derby, who was the author of *Sibyl* and *Coningsby;* and, on the other hand, it was Lord Derby and not I who sang that historical pæan of exultation over the "dishing of the Whigs."

PEEL. Such distinctions between leader and lieutenant would hardly have served a rival of yours had it suited you once more to head a party revolt. Again we should have heard the sarcasm about the theft of the Whig bathers' clothes.

LORD B. Excuse me, I was never in the habit of repeating my humble epigrams; and the repetition in this case would have been singularly inappropriate. The Whig clothes! Why the Whigs themselves stood aghast at us in our strange and unrecognised apparel. And well they might, for it was not the stolen attire of Lord Russell or Mr. Gladstone, or even of Mr. Bright, but the cast-off costume of Vivian Grey. Yes, the peers and the plutocrats, the grandees of the shires and the magnates of the City, these it was whom I watched defile before me arrayed

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in the fantastic habiliments of my youth; and if there was any humiliation about the business, it was theirs and not mine.

PEEL. I do not defend them; far from it. They betrayed their trust—a trust committed to them by the country and trafficked away by them for a party victory. You boast of having educated them in your principles; but you have just recalled to me—and I thank you for the reminder—that it was Lord Derby who talked of "dishing the Whigs." Which teaching, think you, had the most influence upon your pupils, that of the political theorist who talked to them about striking new low-lying strata of Conservatism, or that of the practical politicians who pointed out to them their opportunity of outbidding and outwitting their adversaries and bade them use it?

LORD B. Oh, the schoolmaster had very efficient ushers; he has never denied that. But surely, Sir Robert, your analysis of the situation is a little unjust. You altogether omit the element of popular agitation, and of the natural, the most proper, the truly patriotic desire of a Conservative party to give peace to the land.

PEEL. Where was there any agitation for household suffrage? For a measure of reform—yes: though even the demonstrations in that behalf—a few noisy meetings in the provinces, and the levelling of the railings of a London park—were mere child's play to what we both of us remember. I abandoned Protection under pressure of an impending famine; I assented to the emancipation of the Catholics before the menace of civil war. But you, my lord, to what did *you* surrender in 1867? What popular

demand was there which would not have been satisfied, nay, which would not have been amply satisfied by a far less revolutionary measure than you proposed and carried?

LORD B. The Opposition were bent on tripping up our heels. Had we stopped short of Household Suffrage a defeat of Ministers and a dissolution of Parliament would have followed.

PEEL. Yes, and the Liberals might perhaps have returned from the polls with a still larger majority. But what then? Would it not have been ten times better for the country, ay, and in the long run for the Conservatives, if they had? Do you, of all men, pretend to so little knowledge of the Liberal party as to think that their zeal for progress is in direct proportion to the strength of their parliamentary position? The ratio of variation is inverse. Had they come back strengthened from the elections, the Reform dose would not have been administered to the country out of the ample table-spoon of the Radical; it would have been doled out from the minim-glass of the Whig.

LORD B. And how long would the patient have been satisfied with it?

PEEL. How long? a generation, twenty years, ten years, who knows? But who knows, either, how much might have been gained by even the shortest of these pauses on the Democratic path? And what kind of Conservatism is that which does not appreciate the inestimable advantage of substituting gradual for sudden change?

LORD B. The answer is simple. It is the Conservatism

of practical intelligence as distinguished from the Conservatism of mere sentiment and tradition. Whether gradual or sudden change is best depends upon circumstances. The change from an untenable to a tenable position can never be too sudden. And if new political forces have to be recognised—forces which you must learn to control or they will destroy you—how should the recognition of them be gradual? You cannot learn to control them till you set them free to work, and the sooner you liberate the sooner will you have mastered them.

PEEL. Phrases! phrases! Is the position of your party tenable now? And can they control, or, for the matter of that, could you control the forces which you called into being? For a time I know you persuaded your party that you could; but the dream of 1874 had the awakening of 1880, and in what plight do we find them now? They are an army without flag or commander, or even plan of campaign. You have untaught them their old methods of warfare, and they cannot pick up the trick of the new. The generals of division are without authority; and a rabble of subalterns, but one of whom has even the excuse of Vivian Grey's youth for crediting himself with that adventurer's genius, are fighting for your broken bâton. What is to become of such a force? The outlook is most disheartening.

LORD B. Sir Robert Peel an alarmist!

PEEL. Not so. I have faith in a fundamental Conservatism permeating the entire English people; but you must go deep down to reach it; and much that we prize may be dug up and shovelled aside, before the Radical digger

strikes that bed-rock with his spade. As to the middle classes there is not, and never has been any fear. *Their* interests, at any rate, I always understood; and I see many worthy exponents of them among your own colleagues. Inefficient administrator as you were,—and no statesman of your mark was ever so inefficient,—you knew how to choose men capable in administration. The chief departments of the State under your Government were all respectably and some admirably filled. Your Chancellor of the Exchequer, your First Lord of the Admiralty, your Secretary for War, were men whom I should have chosen myself. But you cannot live by administration alone; and what mark did you make on national policy? What tradition of legislation did you leave behind you to strengthen your successors, and to let your countrymen know to whom and to what they might turn when the season of alarm should come? You left nothing of the kind. The history of your six years of rule can scarcely be said to form a part of your country's story. It was a mere digression into foreign politics. Your Government lived upon an episode and died of its conclusion. The nation, wishing at last to return to its own affairs, displaced you; and when your downfall proved that you had alienated the classes through whom I was wont to govern, without securing more than a fleeting popularity among the masses whom you boasted your ability to lead, I should have thought that not only would your reputation by this time have perished, but that it would have been the indignant hands of your

own—I cannot call it our own—party which would have laid bare its imposture to the world.

LORD B. And you would really have thought so, Sir Robert? How strange then is the irony of circumstance! The hands which were to have unmasked the Minister have just unveiled his statue.

LUCIAN AND PASCAL.

LUC. Confess now, O my friend, if that name offends you not, that you have done me some injustice.

PAS. You are certainly more reverent in your speech than in your writings, and perhaps in your mind than in your speech. But you may easily forgive me for having thought worse of you than you deserved. Historic tradition has branded you as a wanton mocker at holy things, whose insults to the supernatural were punished even in the upper world. Suidas, you may perhaps have heard, declared that you were devoured by dogs.

LUC. Suidas has himself been devoured, and by a more voracious than the canine maw. Oblivion, I understand, has left nothing of him but the name—unless indeed his surviving scholia may be taken to represent his brains, rejected by indigestion, or spared by malice. But I need not grudge his shadowy immortality to this pedant, who hardly lives, even for scholars, save in his spiteful fablings about me.

PAS. If letters really humanised, he would have judged far more charitably. A scoffer at the gods you may have been, but I see now that you were something more and better than that.

LUC. Better? I do not know that I can accept the compliment. I honoured wisdom; I revered virtue; I would have kissed the feet of Truth if I could have found my way to her through the crowd of philosophers. But I must rank myself lower as a follower of the good than as a destroyer of the evil. The false and filthy legends of our Pantheon—

PAS. Were the human pollutions of a divine spring—a fountain of living water which from the dawn of man's perceptions has, by God's all-merciful ordinance, welled up perennially in the human heart. The stream, I own, was flowing dull and turbid enough in your day throughout the heathen world: but you did not seek to cleanse it; you did not help the followers of Him whom you called—may the blasphemy be forgiven you!—the "Crucified Sophist" to turn its waters into a purer channel. You strove to dam them at their source.

LUC. Your metaphors mislead you, O excellent one; you cannot know how utterly vile was our religion.

PAS. Nay, it is language which misleads *you*. That which was vile was not religion, but the exterior symbols of the cult. Religion is in the soul, and, implanted there by the Holy One, it is of kin to holiness alone. It touches, it is touched, by nothing base or foul. But wheresoever in the world the soul of man has been lifted up in prayer or thanksgiving to an invisible Power, there, in whatever ignoble liturgy of paganism, the true God has been worshipped. It was thus, as our apostle told your philosophers, that "He left Himself not without witness, in that He did good, and sent us rain and fruitful seasons,

filling our hearts with food and gladness." I cannot doubt but that many a simple husbandman of Hellas, blessed with an abundant harvest, has in this sense given thanks to the Unknown God, and that while his foolish altar-fumes lingered round the senseless image of Demeter, the incense of his spirit reached the throne of the Most High.

LUC. I should be glad to believe it—if only for the assurance that the Supreme Being is not so savage and childish as to need placation by the steam of victims. I should wish to think of him as one who would be content with the love and gratitude of his creatures, letting the roasted kids go where they might. I have never had anything to say against your grateful husbandman of Hellas. His religion has been unassailed by me.

PAS. Nay, for you destroyed its symbols, and symbolism is the only articulate speech of religion for the ruder tongue. Deprived of symbolism the religious spirit of the mass of mankind must droop and languish, as thought itself would wither among a community of the dumb.

LUC. But surely one may rid a language of a few of its barbarisms, and purge its lexicon of the obscene slang which has too long passed for classical.

PAS. Not, O Lucian, as you essayed to do so. Superstition may mar religion, but you cannot, by the method of ridicule, destroy the one and leave the other untouched. Superstition is to religion as the parasite to the oak; and ridicule is as the axe set to do the work of the pruning-knife. Not in your fashion did that greatest Apostle of

our religion, whom but now I cited to you, attempt your task. It was with no words of taunt or railing that he, who never feared the face of man in his denunciations, addressed your Athenian sages on the Hill of Mars. The very excesses of their Polytheism were turned to the orator's purpose. He praised them for their profound "religious awe;" for it is this and not "superstition" that δεισιδαιμονία signifies; and appealing to the Altar of the ΑΓΝΩΣΤΟΣ ΘΕΟΣ as the warrant for his praises, he suddenly assumed the priesthood of that untended shrine. "Whom therefore ye unknowingly worship, Him declare I unto you."

LUC. Yes, I have heard of the speech from those who were among its audience. Its exordium was certainly a master stroke of rhetorical tact; and I have always wondered at such graceful urbanity in a Jew.

PAS. There was grace in it indeed, O Lucian, but in a higher sense of the word than yours. It was the expression of the Apostle's inspired sympathy with all forms of the emotion of worship.

LUC. May be: but it produced all the effect of the most studied, and the most undeserved flattery. The Athenians multiplied gods for the sake of multiplying arguments. I doubt whether the Stoic and Epicurean babblers whom Paulos addressed had so much as had experience of the "emotion of worship" in their lives.

PAS. Surely you wrong them. We know that the Apostle made converts from among their number.

LUC. Your innocence is childlike, O best of men. The accession of a few philosophers to your religion was of

little more significance than that of the women who accompanied them. Vanity, the desire to be talked about, was the probable motive in both cases, unless, indeed, the women changed their religion to disconcert their husbands.

PAS. How many hearts the preacher may have turned to the true faith is known only to the Searcher of hearts; how many eyes he may have opened is the secret of the Father of lights. But sure am I that ridicule of their errors would only have hardened and blinded those whose pride and whose vision it was the aim of the Apostle to subdue and purge.

LUC. It may be so; but it surprises me, O worthiest one, to hear you say so. But sparingly, I think, did you yourself practise that mode of treating error which you applaud in Paulos? Your works belie your doctrines.

PAS. My works, O Lucian! What can you know of them?

LUC. There are those among us, O most subtle of disputants, who have them by heart; and many a time have I listened to their recitation with wonder and delight.

PAS. Truly? I should not have thought that I had any admirer so devoted as to have studied me thus.

LUC. Nor have you, at least to my knowledge. Those who have thus intently applied themselves to your writings are not your disciples but your adversaries. They recite your *Letters* with protestations of their falsehood, and maledictions of their author. But to me who care not an obolus whether your charges against this sect were just or unjust, the skill of your attack and the glitter of your

weapon afford perpetual pleasure. Plato himself was not a more consummate master of the dialogue; nor shall you find a keener dialectic, a clearer analysis, an irony more demurely deadly in the interrogatories of the Platonic Socrates. I have, it is true, no learning in that lore of mysticism which you handle in your earlier disputations. I cannot follow your deliverances on "sufficient grace" and "proximate power." But the ethics of conduct are matter of interest to the philosophers of every age, and wit is the special inheritance of the Greek. I have listened to your recited colloquies with the—how call you him?—Jesuit, casuist, as I should have listened, had the gods allowed me the opportunity, to the Socratic elenchus of an Athenian sophist. I have watched the discomfiture of "Father Bauny" as I should have watched the toils a-tightening round the entangled feet of Thrasymachus. With what disarming courtesy do you approach your doomed antagonist! With what blandly feigned indifference do you propound the questions which are to undo him! There is the stealth of the serpent in your advance, the fascination of his eye in your grave intentness; it is with his leisurely cruelty that you press your victim into the corner from which there is no retreat; and the mortal blow is at last delivered with all the dazzling swiftness of the reptile's darting tongue. . . . . But I do not call this dealing tenderly with error.

PAS. Nor should *such* error be tenderly dealt with. You have failed, my friend, to distinguish between the erroneous and the corrupt. Honest superstition must be warily and gently ridded, for it has its root in religion,

and draws its vital sap from the same soil; immoral doctrines of morality cannot with too stern a swiftness be cut away. It is the difference between the parasite and the gangrene, between the natural outgrowth which may kill, but can only slowly kill the parent stock, and the morbid excrescence which is filtering its alien poison at every instant through the ducts of life.

LUC. I greatly admire your aptitude in comparisons and contrasts. It seems to be a talent peculiar to the moderns. The disputants of my own time would never have thought of attempting to prove a proposition by drawing a couple of pictures and declaring that their resemblance or difference was an argument.

PAS. Analogy however is no unsafe guide, if wisely used. You said just now that you cared not an obolus whether my charges against the Jesuits were just or unjust; but you meant, I suppose, that you cared not whether I had truly or falsely imputed to these doctors the teaching which I condemned. Assuming that I imputed it truly (and the accuracy and fairness of my citations from their casuists I have maintained by an unanswered challenge) you will not, I think, dispute the justice of my comparison. Murder, theft, adultery, are surely among the worst diseases of the body social: and what but poison is that doctrine, what but poisoners those teachers through which and whom these loathsome maladies are propagated?

LUC. Gently, gently, O best of men! I may grant you your "poison" perhaps, but "poisoner" begs the question. Administer the antidote with all speed; purge and sweat the sufferer to your heart's content; but be not in too great

a hurry to crucify the rival physician. Let us first be sure that he mistook not the poison for a wholesome drug.

PAS. You never knew these men, O Lucian. They were no mistaken theorists; they were conscious charlatans treating their patients with sweet, if deadly medicaments, that they might swell the concourse into their consulting chambers and increase their gains.

LUC. They were blinded then by self-interest, and they may be the more leniently judged on that account.

PAS. Leniently! the more leniently for having not merely betrayed but trafficked with their trust. I cannot hope, O Lucian, to find even in the best of pagans the Christian horror of sin: but you, who were a philosopher, you, who loved temperance and justice, and were true, according to your imperfect lights, to the nobler conception of human life, bethink you what it is that such men do. Enrolled like ourselves in the army of virtue, clad in its uniform, bound by its oath, practising its exercises, they move unsuspected in our midst, and, for their own advancement, sell the citadel to the besieging passions. By the code of every nation, by the usage of every army, such men are adjudged to die.

LUC. It is to be hoped so; for you have certainly put *these* men to death. You hurled the traitors from the Capitol—I will not say from the Tarpeian rock, for that place of punishment took its name from the criminal who first suffered there, whereas it is through your *Letters* alone, they tell me, that these obscure malefactors will be remembered. But I can well conceive how you must have exulted in the execution of their sentence.

PAS. There, O Lucian, you are in error. I felt no exultation, or at least I willingly indulged none.

LUC. What! tenderness again? I thought that to error of this kind no tenderness was to be shown.

PAS. Nor was it. But sternness in inflicting punishment is a different thing from delight in its infliction.

LUC. In the goodness of your heart you misunderstand me. The exercise of skill is delightful in what art soever or upon whatsoever object it be exercised. Even the idle rhetoric to which I gave up my youth was not without its charms. I rejoiced in it as an adept, even after I had learned to despise it as a philosopher. The handicraft of my uncle I hated with all my heart; I would not have given up an hour of meditation to have carven the Zeus of Phidias. But I have seen the sculptor's chisel strike fire from himself, and his soul leap through his eyes to meet the life which the fool fancied he had breathed into the marble. Rhetorician and statuary in one, your writings must surely have gratified both your sense of power and your love of beauty; you must have rejoiced alike in your unerring dexterity of workmanship and in the flawless nobility of your work.

PAS. I am not so self-righteous as to deny it, nor within the limits which our faith prescribes to us, need I scruple to acknowledge it. It is natural for man to find pleasure in the exercise of the faculties which God has given him: their Divine Bestower has, in the inscrutable counsels of His providence, so ordained it. 'Tis through the earthly delights which He has provided, through the earthly desires which He has implanted, that He perpetuates the

human race itself; and He has chosen to perfect our powers of mind and body by stimulating us to their practice with the spur of appetite. I could not, therefore, but take pleasure in the actual labour of refuting the Jesuit ethics: but unmixed exultation, whole-hearted pride in the result—that indeed were a temper not to be indulged in, but to be resisted with all my might. My work, O Lucian, was the reproof of sin, and to have exulted with no alloy of sorrow in the doing of it would itself have partaken of the nature of sin. . . . Do I make myself understood?

LUC. To my shame, O excellent one, you do not. The confession is painful to me, for such is your mastery of exposition that I know the fault must be mine.

PAS. It is good that sin should be reproved; but it were better that it did not exist. The necessity and the work of reproving it do but serve to remind us that the heart of man is corrupt in all things, and desperately wicked, and self-abasement will soon cast out vain-glory if we meditate on that.

LUC. But why then meditate upon it? My wits, by Hermes, must be thicker than I thought. The destruction of a hostile army reminds us that our country has enemies, but we do not throw dust upon our heads on that account: though perhaps it were better to be without enemies than to have to hew them in pieces.

PAS. Alas, my friend! I would that the simile were a true one! I would that the hosts of darkness were thus immiscibly divided from the army of light. But it is not so. Both alike have sinned; wickedness is their common portion, and it is not fitting that one array of sinners

should vaunt themselves over-much on a victory over another.

LUC. An array of sinners reproving sin? What paradox, I pray you, what confusion of Troes and Danoi is this? To chide the wicked is not indeed righteousness in itself; but it can never be wickedness. The admonisher of the sinful, so far as he thus serves the cause of virtue, must surely be virtuous. How then can you, and those who, like you, have rebuked sinners, proclaim yourselves of their number? The enemies of falsehood and fraud, of violence and incontinence, must of necessity be the friends of truth and honesty, of mansuetude and self-control. How then can you speak of the soldiers of these two hostile armies as though they were comrades? It is true that they are of like passions with each other; for it is in the temperate indulgence and the due governance of these that virtue indeed consists: but your military metaphor is in no wise helped by that. For why should *not* the army of virtue vaunt itself, and all the more for the temptation which it has resisted, over the army of vice? It is those soldiers who maintain their discipline at the cost of their sympathies who deserve best of their commander and their country.

PAS. True, O Lucian, according to the human estimate of desert. But there can be no room for merit here.

LUC. No room for merit in fidelity under temptation? In what guise, O worthiest, would you have us conceive of our benignant mistress Wisdom, that you should thus charge her with treating her friends and enemies alike?

PAS. You speak—forgive me—as the heathen, and your abstractions are without meaning for the Christian ear.

The Christian is not the follower of Wisdom, but the servant of God.

LUC. Nay, then, of what stuff do you make your God, if faithful service is not to avail with him, and the good and evil are undistinguished in his sight?

PAS. It is only a difference of language, O Lucian, that divides us. The *good* and the *evil* of whom you speak, are merely the just and the unjust of human estimate, the virtuous and vicious of popular repute, the upright, as men count integrity, the wrong-doer, as they measure wrong. These, indeed, and their actions, are ever visible to the all-seeing eye of God; and I should mislead you if I said in your words that "they are undistinguished in His sight." But equally misleading would it be were I to say that God judges between them with the judgment of men. Nothing binds Him, as men are bound, to punish or to acquit. He may stay His hand from the chastisement of the evil, and in the infinitude of His compassion He may forgive them. But those also whom you call "the good" are as far below the level of His justice, as dependent upon the illimitable stoop of His mercy, as the evil. What are our mountains and our valleys to the star? Mere infinitesimal inequalities of surface. And even so, and less than so, are the petty eminences and depressions of our self-styled merit and demerit to Him who dwelleth above the stars.

LUC. I see, indeed, that it was a difference of language that divided us; for you are speaking now in the terms of a new science. I must go to school to you for the very definitions of good and evil.

PAS. God is good, and good is God: definition, O my friend, can go no further than this. All things, therefore, which are not God, are of themselves evil. Not so was it in the beginning, but it is so now, and so it will be until the Divine purpose hath been fulfilled. The whole creation, I say, is evil; for in His inscrutable counsels He has so willed it, even though all things be the work of His hands.

LUC. Your speech, O marvellous one, abounds in marvels. I had not thought to find such subtlety out of Alexandria. Proceed, I pray you: my whole mind is intent upon your words.

PAS. I do not hope, O Lucian—though it is not in arrogance that I say it—I do not hope to make you comprehend the Christian idea of God. Infinite power and wisdom, infinite beneficence and mercy—these attributes of the Divine Being are, indeed, intelligible to the Christian and to the pagan alike; but upon the conception of holiness their minds part company. Yet is it upon holiness transcendent, upon the ineffable power of peace and purity, that the deeper adoration of the Christian heart is fixed. God's power and wisdom, God's beneficence and mercy, are among the tolerable splendours of His throne; but the light before which the angels veil their faces, and which bows the mortal forehead to the dust, is the light of holiness. No man upon whom the word of truth has come can bare his bosom untrembling to its piercing rays; none endure unmoved the horrors of the foulness within. *Tu Solus, tu Solus, Sanctus!* is the common cry of agony alike from the

weakest of neophytes and the holiest of Fathers. Prayer and meditation cannot exorcise the Christian's sense of sin; fasting and penance cannot wear it out; even martyrdom will not burn it away. In the cell of Anthony, in the desert of Jerome, on the pillar of Simeon, on the torture-stake of Sebastian, the thoughts of the saints have ever been fixed upon the unutterable holiness of God, the unfathomable vileness of man. We have misled each other, O Lucian, by speaking of *sin*—a word which to you stands either for committed deeds of evil or else for the proneness of man to give way to his temptations. But the *sin* of the Christian—his "original sin," as our Church has called it—is neither of these; and his *sense of sin*—that absorbing, overawing, overmastering consciousness, proof against the anodynes of repentance and piety, not to be expelled by a life in the monastery or by a death in the arena—is in greater strictness of language a sense of *guilt*. This it is, all strange as it may seem to you, which the Christian feels. It is not remorse for evil deeds committed that abases him; for his life may have been blameless as an unweaned babe's. Nor is it in shame for his evil instincts, and the grosser passions of his senses, that he dares not lift his eyes to the footstool of the Holy One; for his whole life may have been one long victorious struggle against the temptations of the flesh. It is, as I have said, O Lucian, a consciousness of actual guilt which bows his head to the earth—of guilt inherited, guilt transmitted from sire to son, like the taint of deadly disease —of guilt by him indelible and irredeemable, beyond

the ablution of human tears and the expiation of human sacrifices.

LUC. Pause, pause, I beseech you, O best of men. Show your Christian mercy to the bewilderment of my untutored pagan mind. Let me, like the slave of a lapidary, gather up and assort these strange new stones of learning which I lack the skill to cut and polish. "Inherited guilt." Guilt "transmitted from sire to son!" By Heracles! but you Christians have a singular taste in heirlooms. Or is it, perchance, a compulsory transmission? Is the child accursed because the father sinned? The saint, you tell me, is a sinner, though his life may have been as innocent as an unweaned babe's. May it be that—but, nay! it must be by your reasoning, it must follow from your doctrines, that the unweaned babe is itself a sinner.

PAS. You have collected rightly from the premises, O Lucian. In sin are we conceived and brought forth; the curse is upon us even from the womb.

LUC. O Æschylus and Sophocles! into what gigantic house of Pelops have I then been born! Reveal to me, O doctor more terrible than the tragedians, reveal to me the origin, recount to me the legend of this world-wide ancestral curse. What supper of Thyestes, what——

PAS. Peace, peace, O Lucian! To the gibes which you may well be pardoned for uttering it would be impious in me to listen. There is, indeed, a legend of this ancestral curse more tragic than any Pelopean myth. I would willingly recount it to you, saw I prospect of

profit from the recital. But take it not ill, my friend, that I withhold it.

LUC. What! Is the family secret to be concealed even from Orestes himself? Is he to be hunted to sanctuary, and ask no questions? Or is it to be enough for the unhappy fugitive to know that the Eumenides are yelling in his rear, and when the wretch requests an explanation, is he to be bidden to content his ears with the whistling of the scourges?

PAS. Be serious, I pray you, or I can hold converse with you no longer. I will not, I say, recite to you the legend, as you call it, of this ancestral curse. That legend is for the ears of those alone by whom the curse is felt. And you, O Lucian, I may not reckon among the number.

LUC. You speak as though you pitied me. Do you, then, account it such a privilege to lie consciously under the ban of the gods?

PAS. To be unconscious of sin is to know not the mercy and loving-kindness of Him who taketh away sin. Nay, more, it is to feel the misery of man's lot, while lost in ignorance both of its cause and cure. And yet have I sometimes thought that the all-merciful God has vouchsafed some inkling of the Christian sense of sin to the most virtuous among the heathen. Is it not so?

LUC. It seems like arrogance in me to answer for the most virtuous; but to me, at least, the Divine favour has never been shown in that way.

PAS. Never?

LUC. No. Your Deity has never rewarded my virtue

by making me feel wicked. Perhaps I was not virtuous enough to deserve it.

PAS. Tell me, O Lucian, were you always well pleased with yourself during your life on earth?

LUC. You are rallying me, O master of raillery! Or do I indeed seem to you so vain and self-satisfied a person?

PAS. Nay, I am not charging you with active self-satisfaction in that sense. I was thinking merely of repose or disquietude of conscience. Have you never been troubled by a feeling of unworthiness?

LUC. Unworthiness of what? Of the approval of the virtuous? of the respect of the multitude? of the attachment of my friends? Why, truly, yes. I am indeed acquainted—as who is not?—with the sense of unworthiness in that kind.

PAS. But in what way awakened?

LUC. Your question, I suspect, must be a Socratic one. You can hardly be in real want of information on such a point.

PAS. Nevertheless I beg you to answer me.

LUC. I have felt unworthy, then, of the approval of the virtuous whenever I have exceeded temperance in the indulgence of my appetites; unworthy of the respect of the multitude when I have stooped from the freedom of philosophy to put myself even for a time under that yoke of the passions which the vulgar wear perpetually; unworthy of the attachment of my friends when I have failed to assist them in their necessity, or to make them due requital for their services. Whenever I have so borne myself at any time I have felt uneasy.

PAS. And not otherwise, or for any other reasons?

LUC. I do not think so. I have, of course, remarked that other men were uneasy whenever they had neglected the sacrifices; but I myself, as you are aware, have always been of opinion that the gods were not greatly interested in that matter.

PAS. Let us leave the gods out of the question. I may assume—may I not?—that, except when you failed to observe the outward rule of conduct which your philosophy had laid down for yourself and enjoined upon you in your relations with others, you had absolute peace of mind.

LUC. I cannot but fear that some snare is being laid for me; but I will boldly answer your question with a Why not? If I had unduly given way to wrath, or lust, or cupidity; if I had too severely chastised a slave for a trifling fault, or if I had debauched the wife of a friend, or if I had made away with moneys entrusted to my keeping, I should reasonably feel ashamed, and to be ashamed is to be ill at ease. But if I can reproach myself with none of these unworthy acts, and with nothing akin to them, or of a like disgraceful nature, I see not what there is to trouble me.

PAS. To be ashamed, as you well say, is to be ill at ease. We are drawing nearer to each other now. And are you not then ashamed of the temptation to commit these acts, however firmly you may resist it?

LUC. I do not understand you. Why should one be ashamed of what is natural?

PAS. But how if human nature itself is a shameful thing?

LUC. Your question, if I may dare to say so, appears to be a jugglery with words. There can be no such feeling as shame for anything which all men possess in common: it is born of the sense of inferiority, and where equality is it cannot exist. Even thieves are not ashamed of their calling among themselves, but only by comparison with the honest. How, then, can man's nature seem to him shameful, when there is no superior nature to which he can compare it?

PAS. There, however, is the very point. He can, he must, compare it with a higher, a Divine nature; though to *you*, indeed, I may not say, "with the nature of the gods."

LUC. No, indeed, you may not. I have always avoided comparing myself with the gods lest I should grow too proud of my virtue. Zeus the adulterer, and Hermes the pilferer, and Dionysus the tippler might keep the most profligate of mortals in countenance.

PAS. I know; and I speak not of the Divine nature as the barbarous and unclean legends of your religion represented it. But could you form no conception of Deity as something unspeakably higher, purer, holier than the nature of man? Could you not imagine it, let me ask you, by idealising human virtues? Call to mind for a moment the most blameless man whom you have ever known; and then imagine a being—name him god or man, I care not which—who should as far surpass your friend in excellence as he himself surpassed the vilest of his race.

LUC. I have obeyed you. Your monster of innocence is in my mind.

PAS. Then now bethink yourself that even as he is, whom you are imagining, so might all men be: as noble as the worst of them are base, as perfect as the best of them are imperfect. And do you not feel, then, as if the burden of this reflection must abase you to the dust?

LUC. No, by the Dog, not I. I should see no reason to blush for my inches before a live man of six cubits in stature; and you would have me cast dust on my head because I have merely dreamt of a giant. Why should we hanker after the unattainable in anything, whether it be length of leg or altitude of virtue . . . . But you look sad. Have I said anything to grieve you?

PAS. You have, my friend, but unwittingly. I cannot but feel sad at perceiving how helpless is the condition of humanity unillumined by the Divine Word. . . . . In Thy counsels, O Lord, in Thy counsels was it ordained, that through the perfections of Thy Son alone should the eyes of man be opened to the depravity of his nature, and the misery of his estate. Give me grace, O infinite in wisdom, to subdue my——

LUC. I shrink from interrupting your meditations, O most devout one; but you seem to be bringing a new term into the discussion. What is this "misery of man's estate"? Do you mean only that uneasiness of conscience of which we have been speaking? If so, of course I, who know not the uneasiness, can have no share in the misery. But I imagine you to be thinking of something other than that.

PAS. And you are right. I had but a feeble hope of finding in you a comprehension of the Christian sense

of sin: but I had thought that perhaps I might lead you to it by a pagan route. Though you might not feel man's sinfulness, you could not but feel his unhappiness, and it appeared to me to be possible that a mind as enlightened as yours might be already half prepared to associate the two. But I foresee that the expectation would be disappointed. Christianity alone has revealed to man that sin and suffering are but two aspects of the same thing, the obverse and reverse of the coin of life.

LUC. But stay! I beseech you. I do not recognise your coinage. I know neither face of your human drachma any better than the other. This "unhappiness of man" which you speak of is as much beyond my comprehension as his sinfulness.

PAS. And you a philosopher! I cannot believe that you are speaking seriously. Who can have contemplated the life of man, and man's ordering of his life, without perceiving both his restless misery and his abiding sense thereof?

LUC. You are speaking of the vulgar, I suppose, and of the least fortunate even among them.

PAS. I am speaking of the entire race, of the wealthiest, the highest, and the most powerful, no less than of the needy and the obscure. For do but consider, O Lucian, the common life of man, and you will find the plainest proof of its natural unhappiness in the incessant agitations in which it is now compulsorily, and now voluntarily spent. One half of it passes perforce in the unconsciousness of sleep; much of the remainder is claimed from the mass of mankind by necessary toil, and what does man do

with the remnant that is left? Does he treat it like a blessing or like a curse? as a treasure to be cherished, or as a burden to be shaken off? Let his habits answer.

LUC. But whose habits? Those of the idle and frivolous, or those of——

PAS. Of all alike: for distraction is the aim of all. It is the end of the pleasure which is made a business, as of the business which takes the place of pleasure, of war as of the chase, of the intrigues of the courtier as much as the intrigues of the gallant, of the trader's no less than the dicer's gambling. "Pastime" is as truly the name of the occupation which calls itself serious as of the sport which claims but to amuse. Both alike are man's refuge from himself, to each he hurries to escape from recollection of the past and reflection upon the future. Yes; man who loves nothing but himself hates nothing so much as being left alone with the object of his affections. Pursuing nothing save for himself, he flies from nothing so persistently as from himself. The din of the mart, the clamours of the senate house, the babble of the banquet hall, the roar of the battle-field—any of them, all of them, are more endurable to him than the whisper-haunted chamber of his spirit.

LUC. I must reject your proposition for all but the most vacuous and unthinking of men. And even by them repose is constantly commended and often eagerly sought.

PAS. You are right, but what of it? True it is that side by side with that secret instinct, born of the consciousness of their misery, which impels mankind to the

everlasting pursuit of distraction, there is another, the relic of their unfallen state, which tells them that the only true happiness is in repose. And from the strife of these contending impulses there arises a confused desire for some unknown goal of rest beyond that endless stadium of agitation which they are ever traversing and never traverse. They amuse themselves with the imagination that when this or that excitement has been exhausted, this difficulty or the other overcome, there will open to them the portals of repose. The trial is made; the pleasure is tasted, the obstacle is surmounted; repose is won, and found intolerable. And so runs their life away. Their ceaseless struggles to enjoy it have only availed to make them forget it, and in the alternation between ever-new desire and ever-recurring satiety they arrive insensibly at the gate of death. But is that happiness? If it be, there is no difference between happiness and oblivion, and the cupbearer of your fabled gods might have dipped their goblets for nectar in the waters of Lethe.

LUC. You have certainly drawn a dismal picture of the unrest and discontent of the vulgar.

PAS. Of the vulgar? Do you still then persist in misunderstanding me, my excellent friend? The ills which I have described are, as I have told you, the common lot alike of the high and low, of the indigent and of the wealthy.

LUC. No doubt: for ignorance and indolence are not confined to either. But it is I who have been misunderstood. By the vulgar, I mean all those who either from choice, as with most of the rich, or by necessity, as with

all of the poor, concern themselves only with the external things of life.

PAS. You mean all men, in fact, except philosophers . . . . But why do you look thus anxiously around you?

LUC. For fear we should be overheard. The philosophers have never forgiven me the *Auction of Lives;* and if I say anything in praise of them in their hearing they will only suspect it for irony and wax yet more embittered against me. Let us therefore, I pray you, avoid the word "philosophy"—that coin of language which, once so glittering and clean-cut, has been worn down to an unmeaning counter, deviceless and legendless, by the human tongue. In place of "the Philosophers" I would choose rather to speak of "the Wise." It is a title for which there has been by no means so brisk a competition. And I would assign that name to all those who, whether as the disciples of Zeno, or of Epicurus, or in the name of neither, have striven to separate the essence of life from its accidents and to discover and maintain the worthiest attitude of mankind towards it. These let us place on one side, O my friend, and "the vulgar"—by which I mean the men to whom life is an affair of eating, and drinking, of sleep and waking, of marrying and begetting, of the market and the law-courts, of the bath and the playground—let us place upon the other. And I say, then, that it is to the latter alone, and in no wise to the former, that your melancholy words apply.

PAS. Do you mean, O Lucian, that the state of the former is one of unmixed happiness?

LUC. Happiness for aught I know may be like new

wine, all the better for mixing. But I would rather shun altogether the use of a word which has suffered equal maltreatment from the profligate and the pedant, from the haunters of the bagnios, and the dogmatists of the schools. I maintain, however, that the state of these men—of the Wise—is one of content and not of discontent, and that their lives are passed not in disquietude but in repose. Nay, I will apply to them your own test. You urge as a proof of the essential misery of human life that it is spent by universal choice in continual distractions, and that men shrink from nothing so fearfully as from undisturbed communion with themselves. Now it is to that very occupation that the life of the wise man is by preference devoted.

PAS. I marvel, O Lucian, that so acute an understanding should thus deceive itself with words. The occupation that you speak of is in itself a distraction, and it is only as such that it avails. It is not the object reflected upon, but the employment of the reflective faculty, which tranquillises.

LUC. Ah, now, O master of words, you seem to me to be playing with them. In the act of contemplation, as the Wise at least understand it, it is impossible to separate the contemplated object from the contemplating mind.

PAS. Then I know not, O Lucian, how the Wise do understand that word. Will you tell me that the mind cannot take pleasure in the mere busying of itself with ideas and things which of their own nature are not pleasurable at all? Of such sort assuredly are the ideas

of geometry—of its lines, its angles, and its circles. They are ideas in which of themselves the mind could find neither beauty nor comfort: so that whatever pleasure the geometer derives from considering and comparing them and from investigating their properties and relations must consist wholly in the exercise of his own intellectual faculties.

LUC. The error into which you have fallen, my friend, is now apparent to me. I agree that in such a case it is the apprehensive energy alone, and not the apprehended object, which gives pleasure. It is the energy alone, I admit, which has been the source of my own satisfaction while engaged in composing a dialogue, or in studying and analysing the tenets of some new philosophy, or in theorising on my own account upon the origin of the universe and the laws which govern it. This, however, is not contemplation, but different from it altogether.

PAS. I must ask you then to explain to me the difference.

LUC. It is easily done. The state of the mind in those employments which you rightly call distractions is active; in contemplation it is wholly passive. The men who are seeking refuge from themselves in study, or in the transaction of business, or even in the pursuit of pleasure (since of this also man is said to "make a business'), would be described as busy; but engaged in contemplation the whole world would call them idle. And seeing that in this so-called idleness I ever found my highest pleasure, I may claim that the mind which received and conveyed it to me was at such moments not

machine but mirror, and that it was not in the escape from myself, but in communion with myself, that my joy consisted.

PAS. You speak with strange elation! May I ask you how long without intermission this delight of yours has ever endured?

LUC. From daybreak until nightfall again and again. Many a time have I seen King Helios Hyperion enter his eastern palace-gate, and slowly pace his mighty hall of audience, the journey of a day to traverse, and pass at last into his western sleeping-chamber, nor ever budged from beneath the vine-shade before my door. I have welcomed that god of the Persians with a Persian's reverence, and indeed with the same observances: though I trusted to his godship not to take it ill that I used milk instead of wine for my libation, and did not waste it upon the ground. The mountain kids made shift to spare me that offering from their mother; and when my slave had flanked the milk-bowl with a platter of fresh-plucked dates I had all I needed till the evening. Thus, then, have I sat unstirring, till daylight became darkness—not a fugitive, forsooth, from the sense of being, but its delighted, its willing, its wooing mistress; no Daphne to the world of things, but a Danäe, passive in a trance of ecstasy beneath the golden shower of its sights and sounds —the sunlight through the vine-leaves, the procession of the clouds, the hum of the insects, the distant murmur of the Euphrates, the song of the husbandman at his toil: until the sense of vision became fused, as it were, with the sense of hearing into that nameless joy of the soul when,

purged of the lusts and passions of its fleshly prison, it becomes conscious of its oneness with the All.

PAS. But what of the next day, O Lucian? Scarcely I should think could such a mood of rapture be protracted even by the saints themselves.

LUC. The next day, my friend, I would perhaps betake me to my books again: or at noon I would climb the mountain to where the vine-dresser sat resting at his mid-day meal, and talk to him of the promise of the vintage and watch his brown-faced children at their play. Another day perchance I would visit my friend the sculptor across the valley: for I have admired his art like a virtue ever since I ceased in disgust to practise it. Or it may be that I would descend into the town itself, and while away an hour in listening to the chatter of the barber, or the gossip of the baths.

PAS. And are these no distractions, I would ask?

LUC. I can scarcely believe, O skilled in dialectic, that I have caught you in a logical error; but surely you have mistaken my elenchus. I had not to disprove the proposition that the mind requires distraction, but the proposition that only in distraction can it find peace. Could you argue that a certain posture of the body is not restful because to remain in it for ever would give you painful cramps? You could not. Neither can you say that contemplation is not true happiness because it cannot be unchangingly enjoyed. Enough that I could ever return to it after an intermittence with fresh renewal of zest, and find in it the ample satisfaction of my soul.

PAS. And it was truly so? You were not visited even

at the moment of your fullest contentment by a sense of something wanting—a something which the world of sense was unable to yield you, and yet which the soul must have?

LUC. Never: or if ever, only for that brief moment before I remembered that these are the longings not of health, but of sickness, and that when the soul is yearning for the unattainable it is a sure sign that the body is in need of the leech.

PAS. It is enough, O Lucian; you have convinced me of that which I have sometimes doubted. I am now assured that it was the Gospel itself which first inspired man with the perception of his need of it, and that God did not implant that consciousness in the human bosom in advance. Even the "Repent ye!" of the Baptist may have made but half-awakened converts, and only the coming of our Master Christ have brought this Divine unrest into the world.

LUC. Then if that, in truth, was what he brought with him, I see not how you can rejoice at his having come. For it seems to me, though I fear, O most devout, lest I should shock you, that not all the blessings for which you praise him can weigh one instant in the balance against that world-wide curse.

DANIEL O'CONNELL AND ISAAC BUTT.

O'C. And pray why so serious, my worthy Butt? Your face, man, is long enough to dash the hilarity of Pluto himself. Come, what is it?

B. Can you ask, Mr. O'Connell? Our unhappy country!

O'C. Oh, is *that* all? You greatly relieve me.

B. All! Mr. O'Connell! You greatly astonish *me*.

O'C. Do I? You will be less easily astonished when you have been here as long as I have.

B. I am sorry to hear it. Does then our country lose all interest for us in the Shades?

O'C. Far from it. The interest takes a different shape, that is all.

B. In your case, sir—forgive my freedom—it would seem to have taken a shape that strangely resembles indifference, yet I should have thought that the Liberator——

O'C. Had already done enough for Ireland and Irishmen to entitle him to dismiss them from his mind? That at least is what *I* should have thought.

B. You surely jest, Mr. O'Connell. Those who have received benefits from a man of generosity, like yourself, become the dearer to him in consequence. Fortunately for mankind, there is a bright converse to that terrible

aphorism, *Odisse quem laeseris. Amare cui benefeceris* is at least as true; and by that rule, sir, your solicitude for Ireland should be as eternal as your services.

O'C. You have the national tongue, Isaac: but to have kissed the Blarney stone is of no avail down here. Solicitude for Ireland, is it? I loved Ireland with all my soul; not even that bitter Jew who distilled his blackest venom on me ever dared to question that. I loved her and I love her still. If help in her troubles could go forth to her from this abode of the departed, God knows it should not be wanting from me. But even the living patriot cannot help her to happiness, let alone the dead.

B. Mr. O'Connell! The living cannot help her?

O'C. Not to happiness, sir; and it is that perpetual cry of "our unhappy country" that I refuse to listen to. Politics and politicians can no more give happiness to a people than drugs and doctors can give it to a man.

B. God bless me! This is very unlike the O'Connell of national legend. It is almost the language of those sneering Englishmen who are ever bidding us Irish desist from political agitation and cultivate those Saxon virtues in which they pretend to find us so deficient.

O'C. Indeed! So a man is to be charged with indifference to the ailments of his friend because he warns him that health of body is not the same thing as peace of mind. The Englishman seeks to perpetuate the political maladies of Ireland because he wishes to keep her weak, and he cares not a rush whether she is happy or not. I desire, like every true Irishman, to procure her restoration to political health, not as ensuring and still less as

constituting happiness, but as enabling her to compass it for herself.

B. But how? By the cultivation of virtues which she at present lacks?

O'C. I am not on the witness table, Mr. Butt; nor will I allow you to presume upon my historic candour in this way.

B. If you are unwilling to answer, sir, it is not for me, of course, to press you. But you certainly never told your countrymen that they lacked anything which the English could give them, except justice.

O'C. I told my countrymen, sir, as much truth as was good for them, and the English as much truth as was good for my countrymen.

B. Englishmen, however, complained bitterly, I have always heard, of the scantiness of the supply.

O'C. The Whigs did, but you could never satisfy a Whig with anything; and they had special reasons for being covetous of that commodity. I am sorry enough now, egad, that I wasted any good veracity on the dirty sneaks at all.

B. But is it not just possible, sir—if I may be excused so audacious a question—that you might have better served your own and your country's cause if you had dealt a little more liberally with them in that matter?

O'C. No, Isaac, it is not just possible. How can one possibly be too chary of truth to a swindler?

B. The Whigs complained that you were too untrustworthy for them to act with you.

O'C. That meant that they couldn't trust me to honour

my acceptance when I found they had lent me flash notes upon it.

B. But why then did you have any dealings with them at all?

O'C. That's not a very business-like question. You can only traffic with those from whom you want something, and who want something of you. If they are not to be trusted, the utmost you can do with them is to prevent their cheating you; or rather, that was the utmost I could do with them under the circumstances and conditions of my time. Our "unhappy country," as you call her, is in a far better position now. Its leaders have perfected the parliamentary machine that I constructed, but did not live long enough to develop; and thank God there is no more danger of their being cajoled by any English party, be it Whig, Tory or Radical. They are masters of the situation.

B. Good Heavens! Mr. O'Connell, you amaze me. Is it possible that you can approve of the present attitude and proceedings of the Irish Parliamentary party?

O'C. In the devil's name, why not, man? Do you suppose that I gave up wealth and ease, that I faced danger and obloquy, that I spent strength and life in wresting that weapon of representation from the hand of England, and then gave it to my countrymen to look at?

B. No; but you did not use it as your successors are using it.

O'C. Because I had no time allowed me to teach my country how to use it effectively at all.

B. Indeed, sir? Not in seventeen years?

O'C. What are seventeen years in the life of a nation? Nay what are they in the life of a man past fifty, exhausted by a long career of incessant strife, and menaced in his power and popularity by younger men?

B. And yet there were no signs of senile weakness in your bearing. You faced your young rivals without fear.

O'C. Whom did I ever fear to face? I had met and vanquished bigger men than they. But I soon saw that they were winning, and it broke my heart. What wonder? To whose old age has it ever yet happened to see so glorious a work of his manhood seized upon at the very moment of its completion, to be marred and ruined by the hands of ignorant youth? Forged in the fire of conflict, tempered in the icy waters of discouragement, edged and pointed on the whetstone of toil, there lay the good sword which I had won for my country—the sword of parliamentary action—despised and doomed, as I knew too surely, to years of disuse and rust; while hard by strutted "Young Ireland" to the fife and drum of his own shrill and hollow rhetoric, and brandishing the schoolboy lath of insurrection above his addled head.

B. It was indeed an hour of national madness, as many of the wiser even among our own youth were but too sadly aware.

O'C. What then must it have seemed to me—to me who had been a witness of the vain heroism, the barren bloodshed of '98—to me who bore in my breast the conviction, deep-graven as it only can be when the hand of horror traces it on the heart of youth, that the last hope of

Irish revolution expired on the prison pallet of Fitzgerald, and was buried in the felon grave of Emmet?

B. Happy would it have been for us, Mr. O'Connell, if the whole nation had shared the experiences and learnt the lessons of your youth.

O'C. But so the nation had; and it was that which made the enterprise of the Young Ireland fanatics so insanely hopeless. Nobody "feared to speak of '98" but everybody except this handful of crack-brains was afraid to repeat it.

B. They were blinded enthusiasts, I agree; but I think, Mr. O'Connell, that you underrate their intellectual power—their poetic gifts, their eloquence.

O'C. Poetry? eloquence? Do you give that name to the newspaper jingles of Davis, and the academic fustian of Meagher?

B. The merits of verse are always debateable; but surely you will not deny that Meagher was an orator of the highest promise.

O'C. What, then, is an orator? A man who is content to please, or one who aspires to command. Is the end of oratory to produce pleasure, or to incite to action? If the latter, then a man who preaches insurrection and makes no insurgents, is no orator. The people refused to rise at Meagher's summons, and there is an end of the matter. Why should they, to such stuff as he spouted? Do you remember the piece of rant which I drew from him by saying that "no political change was worth one drop of human blood?" Let me see, how did it run? "Against that memorable maxim the noble virtue that has saved and sanctified humanity appears in judgment. From the blue

waters of the bay of Salamis, from the valley over which the sun stood still and lit the Israelites to victory, from the convent of St. Isidore," from—from the fair of Donnybrook, or something of the sort—I forget how it went on, but is that eloquence, if eloquence means the power of persuasion? It may tickle the ears of the student, but what message has it to the heart of the common man? Is it by jargon like that that you could hope to sting your fellow creatures into action, to fortify them for suffering, to reconcile them with death? No: it is in another language that such a summons, to be answered, must be uttered; and the secret of that language was mine. If *I* had called the people to arms, they would have come.

B. I do not doubt it, sir; nor did I for one moment intend to compare the Young Ireland orators with yourself.

O'C. At the time when they began their vapourings I had grown old and weary: I feared for the future; I was jealous for the preservation of my great work; I dreaded the growing madness of the times. Such powers of speech as remained to me I spent in exhorting the people to shun the path of violence. But even then—and certainly a few years earlier, in '43—had I chosen but to raise my voice——

B. Ay, sir, at Trim, at Mullingar, or on the Hill of Tara.

O'C. The Hill of Tara! Do you speak as an eye-witness, or from hearsay of that solemn scene? But what matters? To have been a unit in that countless multitude was to be lost in it, and to know less of it through the senses than could be learnt by report. There was but one

who could see that sight in all the fulness of its awe and wonder, and that was I!—I, the uncrowned king of Ireland, on the spot where ancient Ireland bestowed the crown—I, uplifted in the hearts of my countrymen, like our barbaric monarchs upon their warriors' shields. Oratory! eloquence! These words have been hackneyed out of meaning! Any glib talker who can keep a score of men awake in a lecture room is allowed to honour his babble with their names. But know you what it is to use the voice of a man like the oracles of a god? Know you what eloquence is to him whose mouth is like the cup of the sorceress, with power to delude and delight, to sooth or madden as he wills?

B. To soothe, Mr. O'Connell, is unfortunately but too easy to most people.

O'C. That sea of human beings that ebbed and flowed about my feet at Tara was a sea of a million waves. A million faces were turned towards me, a million hearts beat quicker as I rose to speak. What matter that not a tenth of that vast concourse were within the compass of my voice? They felt it who could not hear it; and when the air's vibrations failed it, it was borne upon a wave of sympathy in ever widening circles to the utmost confines of the throng. Think of it, you triflers with a toy which you mistake for a talisman! A million hearts, a million wills under the control of a single man! Roar and silence, tears and laughter, joy and fury—each of them obedient to l[illegible] lifted hand. Thunder as of the ocean, and I its Nept[illegible] Hush as of the desert, and I its Memnon at the [illegible] dawn! Now I flung laughter like a sudden burst[illegible] sunlight across their upturned faces; now I bla[illegible]

like aspens under the hurricane with the pallor of gathering tears. Ah! Isaac! what an hour was that, and worth what ages spent among the passionless Shades! Oh that I could once again renew its intoxications and its glories! But none can know my yearnings for my ancient power but those who themselves have wielded it: none can feel for me but those who have swept, as I have swept it, that stormy harp whose strings are men!

B. I fear then, Mr. O'Connell, that you can hardly hope for adequate sympathy. As an orator you had few equals in ancient times, and none in your own.

O'C. You are right, bedad! Harry Grattan was the only man who ever came near me; and Harry would have made nothing of it before a monster meeting.

B. He approached you more nearly, however, than any Irish politician who has since appeared. As to those who now represent what I must certainly in this respect call my unhappy country in the English Parliament—ah! what a falling off is there. Eloquence there is next to none among them; and wit and humour are equally absent from their speeches. In their place I see none but low and coarse qualities, whose manifestations I had often to rebuke during my own leadership, and which have developed with fearful rapidity since my restraining influence was removed. Vulgar scurrility, brutal violence of language, [illegible]hich you, sir, must have——

[illegible]C. Bequeathed to them? Is that it?

[illegible]equeathed to them, Mr. O'Connell? No, indeed, [illegible]istake . . . . I meant——

[illegible] meant to flatter me, Isaac, and have overshot

the mark. If you have the national tongue for flattery, I have the national stomach for it; but, faith! it seems that one Irishman can brew more blarney than another Irishman can swallow. To be praised by implication for my mealy mouth is a little too much. Why, violence, coarseness, vulgar scurrility—these are the very things of which the "base, bloody, and brutal Whigs" were in the daily habit of accusing me.

B. Ay, sir, but tempered by wit, redeemed by humour.

O'C. That was as it happened. All I wanted was to knock a rascal down, and if I could load the knob of my shillelagh with a jest, why so much the better. But wit and humour are not to be had for the wishing; and the Whigs are not to get off scot free whenever an Irishman can't think of a joke to throw at them. No, egad! let the Irish politician pick up whatever pebble he can find, clean or dirty, and more power to his elbow!

B. I cannot believe, sir, that our cause is secured by such brutalities as our Nationalist party in Parliament are now continually committing. However, I could forgive them for imitating your occasional intemperances of language, if they would only follow the example of your political moderation.

O'C. Moderation! Why this is a bigger lump of blarney than the other! I am surprised, Isaac, that you, an Irishman, should repeat such cant.

B. Cant, Mr. O'Connell!

O'C. Cant, Mr. Butt. It is the vulgar dodge of the Englishman to discredit every Irish agitator in turn. He makes use of my name as a stick to beat Parnell with, just

as a generation hence he will use Parnell's as a cudgel for his successor.

B. But surely, sir, you perceive a difference yourself. Did you not discourage outrage?

O'C. I did: and with sincerity.

B. And do the Parnellites discourage it?

O'C. What do you mean by discourage? They certainly don't succeed in checking it. The crime list speaks for itself.

B. Do they attempt to discourage it?

O'C. They have deprecated it—some of them—in their speeches.

B. Sincerely?

O'C. Do I keep their consciences? What do I know of that?

B. Mr. O'Connell, Mr. O'Connell! Do you not know, does not every one know, that it was impossible for these men to speak out boldly, strongly, sincerely, against assassination and outrage without offending that foreign party of violence beyond the English seas—the emigrant Irish, whose money supplied the sinews of the agrarian war.

O'C. Well, what then, sir? If these men were as wicked as you suggest, is that any reason why you should accept and pass on to me a cursed hypocritical compliment which, so far from pinning it to my button hole, I would trample in the mud!

B. This warmth is needless, sir; I had no thought of offending you.

O'C. Then I am offended at your not perceiving you

would offend me. Could you imagine that I should care to be flattered by my enemies at the expense of my friends?

B. Your friends!

O'C. Yes, sir. The friends of my country are my own, and should be yours. And they would be, I doubt not, if they had not been your rivals.

B. Mr. O'Connell, you are unjust!

O'C. What, for suspecting you of unfriendly feeling towards the man who rebelled against your rule and overthrew it? Well, I found no angels in politics in my time, and I had no idea that the breed had come in since. Come, come, Isaac, a little soreness as to the seat of honour is only natural in a man who has been unhorsed after a long ride. Ha! ha!

B. I can take a jest, Mr. O'Connell, with any man.

O'C. If you could see one, my good friend, as well as you can take it, you would not have fallen a victim to the piece of humbug which has bamboozled you. Did you really think, now, that the English contrast between Parnell and myself was intended as a sincere compliment to me—that it really meant that I was a good man, and that he is a wicked man, and that only good men can ever expect to succeed in politics? No, no! The masters of an empire built up by fraud and violence are not such simpletons as to believe that, nor even quite such cynics as to feign belief in it. Their aim is to discredit Parnell as a politician, and to persuade the more timid among his countrymen that since I gained my triumphs by what they pretend to call "constitutional" means he might do

the same. Yet what, after all, has he done? Finding the English Parliament in one of its periodical fits of panic about agrarian crime, he worked upon its terrors for the advantage of the Irish people. And I should have done the same.

B. I thought, sir, that it was your boast to have sought and gained your political ends by constitutional agitation alone, and to have dispensed with any irregular pressure of that sort.

O'C. Did you, faith? Then you must have thought it was my boast to drive a locomotive railway engine without steam! Constitutional agitation means working for political changes without *the use* of violence; it does not mean anything so foolish and so impracticable as dispensing with *the fear* of violence. Do you suppose that I was ignorant of the real forces by which Catholic emancipation was won? The Tory Ministry granted it because, being threatened with civil war, they knew—the Duke of Wellington as good as admitted it—that an army largely manned by Irishmen could not be trusted to fight against the Catholic cause.

B. You will never persuade me, however, that your implied appeal to physical force, in the form of insurrection, was not vastly different from the almost open exhortations to midnight violence of which the Irish agitators has of late years been guilty.

O'C. Well, be it so! Crises like that which have just passed away are among the accidents of politics. The fickleness of our country's climate, the poverty of her soil, the passion of her people, have always fought her

battles for her with England; and they would do so still though she had no single voice to speak for her at Westminster. But help from this source is too casual and too fitful to be relied on. What Ireland has always needed is the steady unintermittent pressure of Irish influence in the English Parliament; and I hail her present leader as the discoverer of the true method by which that influence may best be brought to bear.

B. What, Mr. O'Connell? The "policy of exasperation?" Why, it was that very policy which I spent the closing years of my life in discouraging and rebuking.

O'C. My worthy friend, I know it; and bitter, I feel sure, must be your chagrin at perceiving its complete success.

B. But I do not perceive it. I will never believe that England is to be worried or wearied into conceding the claims of Ireland.

O'C. You are not called upon to believe it. I am sorry, my dear Butt, to observe how little you understood the method which you denounced. The "policy of exasperation," at least, as I interpret it, was not meant to coerce the English Parliament, but to prepare the means for its coercion. Its object was to reanimate the militant hopes of the Irish people, and to make them conscious of the power which they could exert, if they willed, in the English Parliament. I need not inquire how far it has succeeded. Facts speak for themselves. What were the numbers of the Home Rule party when you led it, and what are they now? And what will they become when Ireland gets her next chance of increasing them?

B. Political ideas require time to make their way among a people.

O'C. Pooh! political movement requires motion; that is what you mean. It is not the idea which has made its way, but the conviction that the men who represent the idea are worth supporting as enemies of England. I don't suppose that in the dozen years of the preaching of your precious "idea" to the people it has made as many score of converts in the whole of Ireland. So far as the people think about the matter at all, they draw no distinction, and they are right in drawing none, between Home Rule and Repeal.

B. You yourself, sir, must nevertheless have thought at one time that they could appreciate the difference between them, or you would hardly have written your famous letter, so soon to be disavowed, in advocacy of the scheme of Federalism.

O'C. None of your sneers, Isaac! You know as well as I do, you rogue, that I did it to catch the Whigs. All my life, worse luck to it, was spent in dancing at the tail of those blackguards; and I was over-persuaded, by men who ought to have known better, into angling for Whig support with the bait of a name. But, egad, I soon found out my mistake, as you have admitted. My letter in favour of Federalism was but a few weeks' old before I publicly ridiculed the project as "not worth a snap of my fingers." So that you see I regained the confidence of the people almost as quickly as I lost it.

B. I should have thought, sir, that the people would have been unable to follow the transaction at all. According

to what you have just said of them they are unable to distinguish between these two forms of national independence; and waverings between indistinguishables must surely be unintelligible.

O'C. I wish you joy of your wit, Mr. Butt; but the laugh after all is with me. I, at any rate, discovered my blunder in a few weeks, while yours lasted you your lifetime.

B. *Malo cum Platone errare*, Mr. O'Connell.

O'C. I cannot accept the compliment, I tell you; for of course you meant me by Plato. I heartily regret and repudiate my own share in the mistake. But there was more excuse for Plato than for his disciple. I saw nothing for it but to endeavour to ally myself with one or other of the two English parties. The free-lance policy had not been discovered and made possible in my time, but it had been in yours; and yet you clung to your own futile methods till the last.

B. No man of intelligence need be ashamed of having thought that a deliberative assembly should be converted by reason and not coerced by force.

O'C. Any man of perception should be ashamed of having believed that an English Parliament would so much as listen to reason from an Irishman.

B. This is strange language to hear from one of the most powerful of debaters. I had always believed, Mr. O'Connell, that you had as much argument to bestow upon the Parliament of England as you had eloquence, humour, passion, and pathos wherewith to delight your own countrymen.

O'C. I was born to revel in the strife of tongues, and whether I would or would not it brought out every faculty which I possessed. I had argument for Peel, and invective for Stanley, and ridicule for Disraeli, and abuse for all. But I knew at all times that it was by force—material force alone—if not by the menace of an uprising people, then by the brute strength of votes, however and wherever obtained, that the battle of Irish liberties was to be won. This I knew, and for seventeen years—ay, for seventeen years, as you, my good friend, have rather maliciously reminded me—I sought that force in vain. I sought it in the face of disappointments and delays, embittered to me year after year by the taunts of those who accused me—and year after year with greater colour for the slander—of prolonging my inaction for my own selfish ends. Have you forgotten—you are old enough to remember—the cheap calumnies which were heaped upon "the pensioner of the Irish people," the "recipient of the Repeal rent"—ill-paid by it, I call my contemporaries to witness, ill-paid by it for the sacrifices of fortune which he had made for his country's sake. If you do remember all this, can you wonder at my rejoicing that an object for which I submitted with such fortitude to such cruel obloquy has at last been attained by the efforts of my successors?

B. Your successors! Without flattery, Mr. O'Connell, I can hardly endure to hear them called by so honourable a name. I opposed your policy as a Repealer, in 1843; I assailed it, if you remember, in the Town Council of Dublin. But I trust, sir, I knew how to honour the most

illustrious Irishman of my time. Any nation might have been proud to own you as its representative. But Mr. Parnell!

O'C. Well, Isaac, what qualities does he lack?

B. Nay, sir, what qualities does he possess? Has he eloquence? I do not mean mere flow of words, but eloquence of the kind which you possessed in a supreme degree, and to which—a—ahem, others! since yourself, could, in a lesser degree, lay claim. Has he the passion, the earnestness, the humour, the sympathy, which is necessary to command the emotions of great popular audiences?

O'C. And yet he does command them. They flock to hear him by hundreds of thousands; they rage or submit at his bidding; they contribute of their pittances to do him honour. His name is as much a name to conjure with in Ireland as mine was. My good Butt, you take the academical view of eloquence and its ends. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. What more of the gift does he want if he can do all this with what he has?

B. The people idolise him because they see that the English government fear him.

O'C. Then what other faculties does he need than those which have inspired that fear? The conditions of the national struggle have undergone that very change which I laboured in vain for years to bring about. When the fight for emancipation had been fought and won, I endeavoured, as I have again and again reminded you, to confine the conflict for Repeal to the floor of St. Stephens, and it was

only when after long endeavour I found myself powerless in the English Parliament that I took to the platform once more.

B. But would you not have fought your battle in Parliament with the same weapons of oratory which you employed upon the platform?

O'C. I should have fought it with such weapons as I possessed; and so does Parnell. Nor could any man be more thoroughly well equipped for the struggle than he is. Abundant readiness, immovable composure, untiring industry, a natural gift of frigid insolence, which may easily pass for sarcasm, a brain of crystal and a brow of brass—with such an armament he would be a man to be feared in any assembly even if he had no nation behind him: with such a backing I do not wonder that he is winning the battle. His English enemies are bound to reckon with him, if only as a parliamentary power, at every turn; and their most accomplished experts in House of Commons tactics have no choice but to make terms with one who can wield their own weapons more skilfully than themselves. He has made himself, I am told, a consummate master of all their forms of procedure; he has studied their rules as a prisoner's attorney scrutinises an indictment. He refutes their parliamentary pundits out of their own text books, and trips up the Speaker himself with the authority of the more learned officer who sits before him. He knows when to irritate by technical objections, when to sting by insult, when to scandalise by violence of speech, and he rarely resorts to any one of these methods without success. No wonder that his countrymen,

who daily watch the unwieldy English Parliament floundering under his dexterous blows like a harpooned whale in its "flurry"—no wonder, I say, that they should exult in his prowess, and resolve with ever-growing enthusiasm to increase his power.

B. Do you think then, sir, that his imprisonment by the government and his bargainings with them for his liberation have done nothing to diminish his popularity in Ireland?

O'C. I cannot perceive that they have: and therein I find welcome proof that the Irish people are at last beginning to appreciate the force of parliamentary methods. I was told by my malicious enemies that in plucking up the courage to proceed against me for sedition, the government of Peel had utterly destroyed my credit with my countrymen: and though there was more malice than truth in the allegation it was not entirely false. The prosecution weakened my hold over the Irish people, and I felt it. But it did so because the encounter in which I had been worsted was the only form of warfare of which Irishmen in those days could conceive. The only thing they look to now is the power of their leader in the British Parliament, and so long as they find that power unimpaired by the action of the Executive they would think none the less of him if he were imprisoned every year.

B. I cannot honestly say then that Mr. Parnell has upon that theory lost an inch of popular ground; for he has certainly not lost a fraction of his parliamentary importance. He is feared as much as ever by his political opponents: he is followed as obediently as ever by his party. But ah, Mr. O'Connell! what a party!

O'C. Well, my good friend, and what is amiss with them?

B. Can you ask me such a question, sir? Do but compare them with any previous body of prominent Irish Nationalists.

O'C. They need not shrink from the comparison. They are far more capable than the Mitchells and Meaghers, and infinitely more respectable than the Sadleirs and Keoghs.

B. What, sir, this riff-raff, this tag-rag and bobtail of the Irish people, the discarded tapsters and broken serving-men, the publican and the porkseller, who, with no other qualification than impudence and ignorance, have forced their way into the representation of Ireland!

O'C. Publicans are more honest than projectors, and the porkseller does not drive his pigs to the best market with more unblushing openness than the lawyer.

B. But such language! such manners for an assembly of gentlemen!

O'C. Are you a dancing-master, Isaac? Or do you think that the English garrison is literally to be bowed out of Ireland? These young men know their business, I doubt not; and if they find that the rough side of the tongue serves them best—or even that the Irish people think so—they would be milksops to use the smooth one.

B. I never found violence necessary.

O'C. Ball-cartridge is not, at a review: it is even out of place there. Come, come, you surely cannot suppose, my excellent friend, that the evolutions which took place under your leadership were ever regarded anywhere as

serious warfare. Men who spoke of your "field days" in the House of Commons exactly described the nature of those annual displays. It was a parade of bookish arguments, a "march-past" of academical elegances, followed by a complimentary salute from the great guns of the Treasury bench; and then—amid the ironical congratulations of the English newspapers—you folded up your ingenious essay and laid it by for another year My dear Isaac, the whole thing was a comedy—at least to every one but yourself. It was not till Parnell appeared upon the field—and you had been politely escorted to your tent—that the battle began at all: nor was it till your nominal lieutenant but real supersessor had shown how it was to be fought in earnest that the young and adventurous recruits who now follow him thought it worth while to join the colours.

B. Ay, young enough in all conscience, and as adventurous as adventurers usually are.

O'C. Youth, Butt, is something of an advantage in rough games; and as to the other foolish word you have just let fall—why all men are adventurers in politics, except perhaps those hereditary placemen who are the curse of public life.

B. In a certain sense that may be so: but political adventure takes many forms, and the Ireland of to-day is disgraced by it in its lowest and most sordid type. Think, sir, of the system of paid membership, which now prevails in the Irish Parliamentary party, and of the unhealthy attraction which it holds out to every needy newspaper hack, to every scribbler of incendiary

articles in a back street of a fifth-rate county town in Munster or Connaught!

O'C. Think of it? So I do, and admire it too. If I had only had a self-supporting Irish party behind me, in my own time, we would never have had that confounded quarrel about the acceptance of place and emoluments by Irishmen from English administrations. I mortally offended the Young Ireland highflyers by approving of it, but what was I to do? One's followers must live, and the Repeal Rent—well, that was a personal tribute to myself, which I had no right of assigning. What would I have given to be able, like Mr. Parnell, to give my soldiers an order on the national Treasury for their daily pay!

B. Would you have liked, Mr. O'Connell, to have reduced your followers from the position of equals, friends and counsellors, to that of henchmen and parasites? Would you have had them resemble that eager crowd of servitors, who gather round the Irish leader, hating while they flatter the supercilious young Protestant squire who despises while he uses them? Would you have liked that, sir?

O'C. Isaac, I would have liked to win: and I envy the man the well-drilled and disciplined army that makes his winning certain, whether it hates him or not. And if you were a man of action instead of a man of words you would share my feelings. You complain of the Irish party in Parliament that their hand is against every man; you complain of them that they are a force of paid regulars and not of volunteers! Why, these things

are the very secret of their strength, the very assurance of their hopes. The men who are to achieve the liberation of Ireland must be independent alike of English politics and of English money. As a party they must be strong enough to want no help from Whig or Tory, as individuals they must be placed above that pressure of immediate need which prepares the way for the ministerial bribe. These two conditions are now fulfilled, and the liberation of our country is assured.

B. Do you think then that the English people will ever consent to it?

O'C. The English people are wearied to death already by the importunities of Ireland; and it now only needs that some statesman in whom they believe should offer them relief from their incubus upon the faith of his solemn guarantee that the scheme of Federalism which they do not understand is different from, and will never lead to, that repeal of the Union which they instinctively fear.

B. But that statesman?

O'C. Will appear, Isaac, when the time is ripe. Never fear, man! Let the Irish Nationalists but once become the arbiters of the fate of the two English parties, and one or other of these political hucksters, whose system of party government is so fast settling down upon the lees of its demoralisation, will sell the unity of their empire to defeat their rivals. Ireland, you need not doubt, will in a very few years become mistress of her destinies.

B. And then?

O'C. And then? Why, what do you mean, Butt?

B. Ah! Mr. O'Connell, remember what you said a while

ago about the happiness of peoples. Will success—success by such means and under such leaders—secure our country's happiness ; or do you sometimes fear, as I do, that Ireland, in seeking a fuller national life, may be losing all that makes it worth possessing ?

O'C. Why, what the—

B. Nay, sir, let me finish. You, like me, are a religious man, and in all things spiritual a loyal son of our Holy Church. Like me, you respected and upheld the great institutions of human society. History records the indignant rebuke which you levelled at Arthur O'Connor's project for the partition of Irish land. And can you without misgiving commit our country to the charge of men who have drunk so deeply of the teachings of Communism, and who, if outwardly religious themselves, are the willing allies and even the fast friends of those reckless and creedless desperadoes whom Irish-America has flung broad-cast upon the world ? Are you prepared, sir—

O'C. Be silent, you croaking raven ! Could any man escape such feelings, who during the pauses in her interminable struggle looks forth upon Ireland from the world of Shades ? I know them as well as you do, and except in the excitement of the conflict, I am as much at their mercy as you are. But as soon as the armies close again—as soon as I see my countrymen once more at hand-grip with England, and with the spoils for which I vainly struggled almost within their grasp—why then, Isaac, I fling my misgivings to the winds, and whether the victory of the Nationalists be destined to prove a blessing to Ireland or a curse, I wish them victory with all my heart and soul !

THE COMTE DE CHAMBORD AND PHILIPPE ÉGALITÉ.

CHAM. Let me pass, Monseigneur! Your presence is hateful to me. Shadow as you are, I see you through a deeper shade. There is a mist of blood around your head.

PHIL. Probably an effect of the national razor, Sire. A second aureole of martyrdom conferred upon our family.

CHAM. Assassin of your king and kinsman! It well becomes you to thrust his title in mockery upon his heir.

PHIL. *Plus royaliste que le roi,* it seems. The good Louis has long since listened to reason. Do not disconcert him with so ridiculous a spectacle as that of an implacable grand-nephew.

CHAM. The Royal martyr was too faithful a follower of his Divine model not to have forgiven his enemies. But Monarchy does not and cannot pardon its recreant children as a monarch may forgive his treacherous kin: and as the last representative of the House of France I can hold no converse with the worst of its enemies.

PHIL. Last representative? Nay, Sire, I cannot allow such a phrase to pass unchallenged. In the name of the

Monarchy to which you have yourself appealed, I must protest against such a slight being put upon the family of Orleans.

CHAM. What? You appeal to the monarchy in the name of your descendants? Such effrontery as that amazes me even in you. The present head of the House of Orleans—

PHIL. Is now, with submission, Sire, the heir to the crown of France. Perhaps you will hold sufficient converse with me to acknowledge that.

CHAM. If I prolong this colloquy at all, it is that I may reject that claim with all the disdain which it deserves. The heir to the crown of France, by the renunciation of his father, is Don Carlos of Spain.

PHIL. Your Majesty's chagrin at the extinction of the elder branch in France is intelligible and has my profoundest sympathy. But it betrays you into unfortunate extravagances. The claim of Don Carlos is barred by the Treaty of Utrecht, and I know that you are not of those who hold that a Spanish Royal decree could have revived it. If Spain chose to oust the heir male of Ferdinand VII. tracing from Philip V., by abolishing the Salic law, so much the worse for the heir male. It could not have re-established him in pretensions which his ancestor pledged himself to all Europe to abandon. I know, however, that you do not rely upon diplomatic pettifoggeries of that kind.

CHAM. No, indeed! I no more recognize the possibility of a treaty-made or treaty-marred right divine than I can admit the existence of a "constitutional title." The

settlement of Utrecht could no more deprive Don Carlos of his God-conferred attribute of royalty than a vote of the French Chamber could confer it upon your son's grandson.

PHIL. No, Sire? Nor than your own recognition of my son's grandson?

CHAM. Recognition, Monseigneur? I do not understand you.

PHIL. What? Do you repudiate the arrangement of Frohsdorf? Would you undo the work of the Fusion?

CHAM. It is evident, Monseigneur, that you are the victim of some singular delusion. I know of no "arrangement of Frohsdorf," and the incident to which I suppose you to refer as "the Fusion" is strangely misdescribed by that name. I remember indeed a visit paid some ten years ago by certain descendants, lineal and collateral, of a usurping Duke of Orleans, to the heir of their lawful and unlawfully deposed sovereign; and, in obedience to the Divine command which enjoins clemency especially upon kings, I received them graciously. But I know not why this tardy act of penance for their ancestor's sin, this long delayed renewal of their own allegiance, should be called by such unmeaning names. The return of deserters to their flag is not usually styled "fusion" but submission, not arrangement but atonement.

PHIL. Do you think, Sire, that the Orleanist branch of the Royalist party so understood the transaction?

CHAM. I know of no Orleanist branch of the Royalist party. The very phrase is a monstrous abuse of language. An Orleanist Royalist is as much a contradiction in terms as a Monarchical Republican. "Orleanist" is as much the

name of a disloyal faction as "Bonapartist." Legitimist and Royalist are convertible terms, and not till an Orleanist discards his name to assume the former title does he acquire the right to use the latter.

PHIL. Names, I fear, have always filled too important a place in your Majesty's mind. However, I quite agree with you that Royalist and Legitimist have *now* become convertible terms, but they have become so by becoming jointly convertible with Orleanist. Mohammed has come to the mountain instead of the mountain going to Mohammed, *voilà tout!* Madame la Comtesse de Chambord has obligingly settled the question in the most conclusive manner by bearing you no children. And in *this* case of widowhood, I imagine, there is no chance of a second *enfant du miracle.* Divine Providence indeed has been sufficiently wasteful of its wonders already. It was hardly worth a miracle to prolong an expiring family for a single life. But the prayer of a righteous man, and still more of a righteous woman, availeth much; and Madame la Duchesse de Berri was in every way irresistible.

CHAM. Your ribaldry, Monseigneur, is out of date. Had you lived a century later, you would have learnt that even the vilest of profligates is nowadays accustomed to render homage to decency in his talk.

PHIL. I humbly submit, Sire, to your Royal rebuke. But I shall never cease to wonder in silence at the singular futility of that latest intervention of Providence in our national affairs.

CHAM. It was the will of God, who brings low the mightiest things of earth, that the direct French line of

the *Grand Monarque* should end with a prince of such a fate and history as mine.

PHIL. From Augustus to Augustulus—though he, by the way, died fighting, face to face with his foes. But I forgot, Sire, you read nothing but your "Hours." It is as you say. The French line of the *Grand Monarque* becomes extinct with you. But be comforted. You have the consolation of reflecting that the blood of Henri Quatre is still represented in the person of my own descendants. Forgive me for thinking that the lineage which thus survives is the worthier of the two.

CHAM. I can quite understand that you prefer to trace descent from Henri, rather than from Louis.

PHIL. You rightly appreciate the disposition of the family. We certainly prefer to have sprung from the statesman who promulgated the Edict of Nantes rather than from the bigot who revoked it.

CHAM. You are at any rate the true heirs of the conqueror who trucked his religion for a crown. You yourself, Monseigneur, had none of that commodity to take to market, but you were eager in the sale of what you had—your duty as a Prince of the blood Royal, your loyalty as a subject. It was from want of skill and not of will that you failed to gain the throne you intrigued for, and which your son by a more expert employment of the paternal tactics contrived to secure. The unscrupulous statecraft of our Béarnais ancestor unquestionably survived unto the sixth and seventh generation. I doubt not that it will appear in the ninth.

PHIL. I trust so; but your Majesty is not yourself without some of the qualities of our illustrious common ancestor. You must have been at some pains to conceal your real sentiments towards the Comte de Paris. You were wont, I believe, to speak of him almost affectionately to your friends.

CHAM. Paris has attractive qualities, and it is in my nature to respond to them; but the Countess judged him more severely than I did; and warmly as my heart may have yearned towards him, my understanding too often told me that she was right.

PHIL. Your Majesty's understanding has always needed a spiritual director, and a daughter of the Duke of Modena was especially well qualified for the purpose. But even I, you see, detested as I am, can succeed in detaining you here in converse with one whom you loaded with reproaches, and with whom you vowed you would hold no communion. Such is the fascination which has ever been exercised over you—for monarchs have the truth told to them *here*—by any stronger will than your own.

CHAM. It is not so. I do not remain in your company under any such compulsion as that. It is because, as a king and as a Christian, I repent of the hasty anger which was kindled within me on my first meeting with so treacherous and deadly an enemy of our House. Yet I know not why I should have felt wroth at the sight of one whose soul I have many and many a time commended —smile not, Monseigneur—to the intercession of our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

PHIL. Whatever be the result of your good offices, Sire, I shall always feel deeply grateful to you for them.

CHAM. Insensible as you still seem to be both to shame and to remorse, I dare not hope that they will be effectual. Ah, Monseigneur! what a heart must have been his who could consent to the death of so affectionate a cousin, so benevolent a prince, so good a man! And to think that that heart should have throbbed with the blood Royal of France!

PHIL. The affectionate cousins of the House of Orleans appear capable only of vertically transmitting their good will; it has always declined to extend itself in a lateral direction. None of them has ever been able to instil his cousinly sentiments into his wife; and as the wives are generally as strong as the husbands are weak, the amiable feelings entertained towards us by the latter are not very fruitful in acts.

CHAM. I know that your Queen disliked you, and that you resented the too open manifestations of her repugnance.

PHIL. I should have been foolish and ungrateful to have done any such thing. Nothing was to be feared from that woman, nothing was fatal in her, but her love. She loved her husband, and led him step by step to the guillotine. She loved her children, and condemned them to starvation and exile. She loved the Lamballe, and it was her Royal love transformed into popular hatred that fixed the favourite's head upon the pike. She even loved France, after her fashion; and you see what she has made of that attachment.

CHAM. Nay, you have no right to reproach her memory with the misfortunes of her country; it is indeed unworthy of your intelligence. The fate of a great empire is not determined by the levities of a thoughtless woman, however highly placed.

PHIL. It is determined by nothing, according to your views, Sire, but the will of God. But I know not why that will should deny itself the instrument of feminine spite and vanity more than any other of the trifles with which we are told it works. Moreover I know not how you can regard her influence over her booby husband as an insignificant agent in events. You could not so describe the voices of the false prophets who urged the King of Israel to his doom; and Marie Antoinette was for ever bidding that ill-starred Louis to go up to Ramoth-Gilead to battle. Like Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, she made horns for her husband—I am speaking, of course, of the Scriptural "horns of iron,"—and assured him that with these should he push the Syrians of the Revolution until they were consumed.

CHAM. As a kinsman, Monseigneur, you might have dissociated the husband from the wilful wife; and as a subject you might have distinguished between the well-meaning monarch and his rash adviser.

PHIL. I would willingly have done so: nay, as long as it was possible, I did.

CHAM. How? You dare to say so? You who gave your vote—there is horror in the very speech of it—for the death-sentence of the Convention!

PHIL. It was then impossible to save him. It was too late.

CHAM. To save him! Ay, but not to die with him! It was not too late for that.

PHIL. No, indeed: it was too soon for that. Even my execution, ten months later, appeared to me to be premature. And had I not voted at the trial like a good citizen of the Republic I should probably not have secured as much respite as that.

CHAM. Was it worth the price you paid for it, Citizen D'Orleans—eternal infamy?

PHIL. The question is hardly a fair one. The Republic certainly gave me very short measure for my money; but I could not know at the time that she would drive so hard a bargain with so devoted a servant. She ought to have reflected that the world had seen no such heroic sacrifice of family affections to the command of a superior since Abraham stacked the faggots for——

CHAM. Silence, silence, in the name of human nature itself, even if you are careless of offending Heaven!

PHIL. I must trust to your Majesty's intercession in that last matter: but as to human nature, I am not careful to excuse myself for having obeyed its first instinct of self-preservation.

CHAM. Ay, the first instinct of human nature in the savage, but in him alone. In the civilised man it competes with others well-nigh as powerful as itself; in the man of gentle blood it has to wage a still more unequal struggle with the instincts of honour; in the religious man it cannot strive for a moment against the voice of God. In your

own breast, Monseigneur, I know well that it had no such adversary as this last to overcome; but at least it should have found the other two arrayed against it; and much indeed do I marvel that, dissolute, selfish, godless as you were, you should not have been saved from complicity in the shedding of that Royal blood upon the scaffold, were it only by some single untainted drop of the blood of Henri Quatre in your veins, some single momentary stir of his chivalry in your soul.

PHIL. You marvel at that, Sire—though, indeed, a secular title of any kind appears ill matched with your saintly simplicity—you marvel at that? Your wonder is characteristic of a Bourbon of the elder branch: as characteristic as your constant appeals to that illustrious prince who in turn attracts you by his genius and shocks you with his religious indifference, and from whom you and your family would have received every one of you the requital of a hearty contempt. Has it ever occurred to you to compare the history of the two races of Bourbons that sprang from the loins of Louis XIII., and to ask yourself whether the doctrine of Divine Right as illustrated in French history, has reason to have commended itself to the intelligence of the House of Orleans?

CHAM. No, Monseigneur; but I cannot see how, to a believer in God's holy ordinances for the government of States, the doctrine of Divine Right could possibly be affected by the comparison.

PHIL. To a believer, Sire, who has completely surrendered his intelligence to his superstitions, perhaps not; but I should think you would allow that a less robust belief

might be severely tried by it. One does not indeed expect the Supreme Being to provide for the strict devolution of king-craft as He provides for that of kingdoms—that is to say, according to the law of primogeniture with limitation to issue male. One would expect that Royalty and capacity should occasionally be separated,—that the elder son should sometimes inherit the father's crown, and the younger his head: but that such separation should be invariable, that priority of birth should never be found in company with preponderance of brains, the tools of sovereignty fall never to him who could handle them—that, I confess, is an arrangement which I find it difficult to regard as Providential.

CHAM. I can understand your difficulty as a matter of theory; but I find it as difficult on my own part to recall any historical instance in which it can have practically perplexed you.

PHIL. And that, Sire, is a difficulty, which I in turn can understand. In a Bourbon of the elder branch it is thoroughly intelligible. The divorce of capacity from Royalty is never perhaps complete in any reigning family until its very existence escapes their detection. But you must excuse the princes of the House of Orleans, if what was invisible to you was only too painfully evident to them.

CHAM. I regret, indeed, that the shortcomings of my family should have shaken a faith so graced by humility as yours.

PHIL. They could hardly fail to do so. Consider, Sire: between Louis XIV. and yourself you have had four ancestors on the throne of France; between his brother

Philippe and the Comte de Paris, there have been six Dukes of Orleans. Was it deliberately decreed by the King of kings that, while the French crown was passing from empty head to empty head, and the sceptre from one nerveless hand to another, there should, at every demise of the sovereignty, be seen standing at the side of the new monarch—weak, corrupt, or stupid as his predecessor—a kinsman as conspicuously fitted to mount the throne as his king by Divine Right was fitted only to take his seat upon the foot-stool? Does your Majesty find nothing *bizarre* in that Providential scheme?

CHAM. You must first satisfy me of its fulfilment. Point out to me the personages in whom this remarkable series of contrasts was illustrated.

PHIL. Of which do you require proof, Sire? Of the vices and imbecilities of your own House, or of the abilities of mine?

CHAM. I know that some of my ancestors have been censured by foreign Republican and anti-Catholic historians; but the shining virtues of their contemporary princes of the House of Orleans have been kept a profound secret from me.

PHIL. With many other things, Sire, which it would have profited you to know.

CHAM. Be that as it may, Monseigneur, my education has not impressed me with your conviction of the vast superiority of your ancestors to mine.

PHIL. Because your Majesty's education was in the hands of the priest and the courtier—the former of whom hates the House of Orleans for its Liberalism, and the latter of

whom dared not praise the forefathers of Louis Philippe to the ears of the grandson of Charles X. But the startling contrast I have exposed to you is familiar enough to any impartial student of our history. Such an one will tell you, if you ask him, that, from the death of Louis Quatorze to the flight of Charles Dix, there has been no French king who was not inferior, and but one who was not contemptibly inferior, to the Duke or Dukes of Orleans who flourished in his time. Nay, he will even tell you that by no process of chronological permutation could any one king of France be matched, save at a disadvantage, with any earlier or later representative of the younger branch. For where, I ask you, Sire, will you look among my family for a Duke of Orleans to keep in countenance the swinish Louis Quinze, or his sheepish grandson, or that grandson's mulish brother? Sensuality, imbecility, obstinacy incarnate —these were not the mere vices, not the mere failings of the three Royal characters, they were the characters themselves? Which among us Bourbons of the *branche cadette* will you select for the comparison? Shall it be Louis, third Duke of Orleans, the scholar and philanthropist? Shall it be his son, my father, the munificent patron of art and letters? Shall it even be the Regent himself, a libertine and free-thinker it is true, but an able statesman, a master of the European politics of his time? Nay, though I ask it in all humility, shall it even be the unworthy cousin who addresses you—a man no doubt of many failings, intellectual and moral, but still, I submit, a thousand times more competent to have coped with the Revolution than that wretched distaff in the hands of a passionate and intriguing woman?

CHAM. Let the Revolution that swept you away reply.

PHIL. Any man may be washed from the deck when incompetent hands have laid the vessel broadside to the wind. Had I ever grasped the tiller, your taunt might have been just. I claim at any rate to have maintained the inheritance of our superiority, and to have handed it on to my son. He was as much more capable than the deposed Charles as I was more capable than the decapitated Louis.

CHAM. You have omitted all mention, Monseigneur, of one Louis who died with his head upon his shoulders.

PHIL. Provence, indeed, deserved to carry it to his grave: for it contained all the brains of the family. Not that the addition of his two brothers' share amounted to much: but it sufficed, as you say, to keep his head on his shoulders, and not only that, but to keep his body in France. The skull so exceptionally favoured in its contents has secured its owner a mortuary residence in the family mansion of St. Denis, which is better than furnished lodgings at Goritz.

CHAM. Or at Claremont. You seem to forget that proof of the ability of your son.

PHIL. No, Sire, I do not. He failed, and he fell: but he fell by a single blunder and in a year of Revolutions. An accident overthrew, and an accident might have saved, him. But nothing could have saved the monarchy which preceded his. Its downfall had been invited and insured by a long course of stupid aristocratic and clerical tyranny—the tyranny of a prince who had learnt nothing from the

execution of a brother, and forgotten nothing in years of exile, a prince impenetrable alike to the instructions of life and the exhortations of death. For I have heard that Louis Dixhuit, when his last hours were approaching, summoned the Comte d'Artois to his bedside, and laying his hand upon your infant head, adjured the future sovereign to "do nothing that could endanger that child's inheritance." And I have further heard that his worthy heir found no more fitting comment to append to his subsequent description of the scene than that the admonition of his dying king and brother was "in bad taste"! Such was the creature of convention, the thing of courtly proprieties, to whom the fortunes of a great empire were to be committed.

CHAM. Enough, Monseigneur. He was my father's father, and he reared me with more than a father's tenderness. Whatever his failings as a ruler, I shall ever revere his memory.

PHIL. You are right to do so. He was a true Bourbon of the elder branch. But have I said enough, Sire, to justify my judgment on that incapable line? Or shall I follow it to Spain, and from Spain to Italy? Does it retrieve its character, in that succession of trifler, debauchee, and cuckold which disgraced the throne of Charles V., from Philip of Anjou to the puppet of Godoy, and downward to Isabella of the Holy Rose? Or in those wretched offshoots from a decrepit stock, the Parmesan dukelings, occupants of a throne as rotten as their namesake cheeses? Or in the Neapolitan Bomba, or in Francis the king of a year, fit companion for the petty princes who,

at the first breath of the revolution came tumbling so ridiculously out of their thrones from one end of the peninsula to the other.

CHAM. I cannot defend the tyranny of Ferdinand; but he was a conscientious ruler according to his lights. To Francis no day of grace was allowed. The last Duke of Parma was a kindly Prince, under whom the inhabitants of the Duchy knew the taste of contentment better than they have ever known it under the rule of Piedmont.

PHIL. It may be so; and the fate of so insignificant a realm is of little interest. I did but instance it to show how universal has been the repudiation of Bourbon rule: great kingdoms and small alike will none of it. And this to be said of a family sprung from the greatest ruler of his age! Come, Sire, confess that I have justified my doubts. Acknowledge that if it be irreverent it is also plausible to suspect the Almighty of having settled the qualities of Henri IV. on the wrong line, and that instead of providing for their descent to the eldest son of Louis XIII. and his descendants he permitted them to pass entirely to the lineage of the youngest son. The wisdom, the generosity, the energy, the courage, the tolerance, the statesmanship of Henri, have never been reproduced save in the princes of the House of Orleans; while the Bourbons of the reigning family have inherited only the insatiable egotism, the vanity and voluptuousness, the blind and narrow bigotry of Louis Quatorze.

CHAM. I listen to you, Monseigneur, without resentment, and even with a kind of painful curiosity. I am wondering whether the inheritance of your descendants includes

anything else besides those family virtues which you review with such complacency. Paris, as I have said, has engaging qualities. He has a frank address, distinguished manners, conversational charm. Under the ordeal, for such it must have been to any man of ordinary sensibility—under the ordeal of his presentation to me at Frohsdorf, he bore himself irreproachably. In point alike of duteousness and dignity, of respect and self-respect, I had to confess to myself that his demeanour did him credit. Can it really be that beneath that composed and courteous exterior he nourished the tormenting envy, the famished ambition, the passionate scorn which you would lead me to regard as among the inseparable race-marks of the House of Orleans?

PHIL. Such envy and such ambition, Sire, could have found nothing to support them in the circumstances and prospects of the Comte de Paris. As your majesty's heir he had no need to envy a position to which he must ultimately succeed: and an ambition which can feed itself upon the consciousness of its certain fulfilment is not in danger of becoming famished. As to scorn, ... well, that is another matter: but I can scarcely suppose that a man of so tolerant a temper as that of the Comte de Paris would have indulged it to the extent of a passion.

CHAM. I am deeply indebted to him for his forbearance, and I appreciate, too, the nobility of a mind which ceases to covet the possession or to envy the possessor of what it is assured of acquiring. My cousin's magnanimity becomes the more admirable to me when I consider the

conditions of its exercise. He is as satisfied with the position of heir to my sovereignty as though I were the actual occupant of a throne. One would think that I was *de facto* as well as *de jure* king of France.

PHIL. For any man of my great grandson's ability the succession to your titular rights is enough. He will know how to wed the *factum* with the *jus*.

CHAM. You think so, Monseigneur? and indissolubly?

PHIL. Why not?

CHAM. For the best of reasons, though you, I know, will smile at the mention of it. It is because God has promised to those only whom Himself has joined that no man shall put them asunder.

PHIL. But He *will* have joined them. What else is the meaning of divine right?

CHAM. Alas! Monseigneur! I fear it is as much beyond your comprehension as other things divine. I have already told you that your great grandson is not, according to the true and heaven-sanctioned law of royal succession, the rightful heir to the crown of France. But even were that his status, it would not give him leave to ascend the throne of St. Louis, when and how, upon such conditions and with such intentions, as he may choose. So only can his divine right be exercised as its Founder shall in His divine counsels have appointed, and the counsels of Providence in that behalf are, I fear, but little likely to square with the policy of a prince of the House of Orleans.

PHIL. We have never pretended, Sire, to be as much in the secrets of the Eternal as our cousins of the elder

branch: but I venture to believe that He will permit His will to be declared to us by the course of French politics. Nor indeed do I know by what other means your majesty proposes to discern the operation of His counsels. If the present rulers of France succeed in accomplishing the object on which they seem to be so intently bent—that, I mean, of disgusting their countrymen with themselves and their works; and if a ministerial *culbute* and an appeal to the people should result in a summons to the Comte de Paris to ascend the vacant throne, why may we not assume that it is Providence which has put it into the heart of a French government to put it into the heart of France that she has had enough of the Republic and would like to make trial of a Monarchy once more? Is it not indeed by this very disposition of earthly events that their Divine Disposer would in all likelihood have brought about, had He ever seen fit to do so, your own Restoration?

CHAM. It may be so: but on what different conditions would the offer to me have been made? Or rather, upon what different conditions must it have been made ere I should have accepted it? The return of France to her earthly allegiance would then have been stamped with the divine approval in this—that it would have signified and certified her renewal of homage to her God. I leave it to you, Monseigneur, to say whether a Restoration effected in the person of the Comte de Paris would have any significance of the kind.

PHIL. I must beg your Majesty to be a little more explicit. In what species of significance would it have been wanting?

CHAM. In the highest and best: in the only valuable kind, in the one kind which would have distinguished the miraculous conversion of a people from the accidental *bouleversement* of a political party. France under Henri V. would have been France repentant, France clothed and in her right mind, with the devil of atheism cast out of her. But France under Louis Philippe II.——

PHIL. Philippe VII. if your Majesty pleases.

CHAM. Ay? Good! it is a sign of grace at any rate, the shame to which that choice of title testifies. . . . France under Philippe VII. would still be the France of the Revolution, still the blasphemous scoffer of the Feast of Reason, still the rebel against God and the declared enemy of His Holy Church.

PHIL. I must demur to the last statement, Sire. Paris is far too shrewd a politician not to come to terms with the priests.

CHAM. He would traffic with them, perhaps, as the Corsican did, and add hypocrisy to impiety with the same worthless results.

PHIL. He would be Gallican, of course, in his leanings, but I see no impiety in that. There is nothing to show that the Almighty is Ultramontane.

CHAM. What, again, would be the spirit of his rule? Would not its inspiring principle be democratic as its origin? Would it not be forced to live upon the sufferance of a democracy, to subsist upon perpetual concessions to those "modern ideas" with which our late holy father Pius IX. in his ever-memorable encyclical forbade us to "make terms"?

PHIL. It would, I apprehend, be a modern monarchy,

and my great grandson is a man of his time. I think I can resume the whole of your objections to it in a single phrase. It would be a monarchy of the tricolour and not of the fleur de lys.

CHAM. I knew it: and I can see no virtue in a Restoration which instead of rallying the people to the royal standard compels the monarch to do homage to the Revolutionary flag.

PHIL. Your majesty's preferences on that point are well known. The invincible, the sacred scruple—or what was supposed to be such—which prevented you——

CHAM. What was supposed to be such? I should have thought, Monseigneur, that its sincerity was sufficiently attested by the sacrifice which it compelled. What other motive could I have had for renouncing my ancestral throne?

PHIL. Renouncing it, Sire? By whom was it offered to you?

CHAM. By my faithful adherents, speaking as they declared, and as I firmly believed, in the name of France. The nation, I am assured, would have welcomed me as king in 1873. But even if resistance awaited me, what but loyalty to my conscience could have prevented me from striking a blow for my rights?

PHIL. Shall I tell your Majesty? To do so I must use a word which is strange to the ears of kings, and which even their cousins—unless, like me, they are made the mark of accursed calumny—were seldom doomed to hear. *You were afraid.*

CHAM. You lie!

PHIL. Your own conscience flings you back the word! Henri, Comte de Chambord, king without a crown, and pretender without a sword! It was not the voice of duty that held you motionless within sight of the goal of your ambition: it was the whisper of fear! Scruple was silent until the hour of action struck. It was not till then that the world heard first of the indispensable lilies, and of the white plume—in English "plume" and "feather" are the same—of Henri of Navarre.

CHAM. You dare to——

PHIL. I dare to give voice to your own unspoken thoughts. Again I say, your conscience is my witness that I speak the truth.

CHAM. So vile a slander is beneath. . . . But no, I cannot! It is the truth! Thou, God, who readest hearts, it is the truth! My conscience—he said well—my conscience, let me hear it, let me obey it—even though it speak to me through those polluted lips!

PHIL. Once more I repeat that. . . . He mutters to himself! The imbecile is praying! *Dieu de Dieu!* That a head so fit for the biretta should have been born to a crown!

EDMUND BURKE AND EDWARD HORSMAN.

BURKE. You have spoken eloquently, sir, in praise of eloquence; but I confess that the more I consider the subject, the more I wonder that oratory should ever have been regarded as an art worth cultivation by men of affairs. Its forensic successes on the great scale are indeed well known, and those of the minor sort are of everyday occurrence; but you will look in vain for any record of its achievements in the history of States. What great orator of ancient or modern times has ever saved his political party or triumphed over his political opponents, turned his countrymen from the path of danger, or guided them into the way of wisdom, by his eloquence alone? Did Demosthenes succeed in rousing the Athenians against Philip? Was it Cicero the orator or Cæsar the soldier who had his way at Rome? Did the elder Pitt contrive to save his country from the crime and folly of the American war? Or was I—if I may without immodesty cite myself—was I any happier in the same attempt? I deny not that Demosthenes and Cicero may have achieved many objects for which they laboured; the career of Pitt was as a whole transcendently successful; in more than one of my own humble political efforts I have gained my end. But

I am forced to believe that in all such cases, whether at Athens or at Rome, or in England, the politician must have had the circumstances for confederates: I cannot indeed doubt it, when I see how completely adverse circumstances are removed from his control. I cannot doubt, I say, that the opinions and wishes of his countrymen must always have favoured him from the outset if he is to succeed; since, whenever the case is reversed, I find him so powerless, even by the utmost exertion of his eloquence, to bend them to his will.

HORS. But is it quite fair, sir, to try political oratory by so severe a test? Are we bound to assume all conditions adverse to its success before we are entitled to assign any value to it as a political instrument?

BURKE. Surely yes. In what other way can we estimate its power? Nay, to what less severe a test do we subject forensic oratory every day? The success of the advocate is measured by the hostility of the tribunal before whom he pleads—whether that hostility be due to the strength of their prejudices or to the weakness of his case. Nor is it deemed any credit to him to win his cause, unless these conditions are first assumed against him.

HORS. Still, sir, the advocate's task bears no comparison in point of difficulty with that of the politician; the practice of the court to which he appeals is in many cases so vastly in the former's favour. The jury decides after, at the most, a few hours' deliberation; the country may take months or years to consider its decision.

BURKE. So much the worse, no doubt, for the rhetorician, but so much the better for the reasoner. And yet with all

this time allowed for his arguments to win their way to the minds of his countrymen, he fails.

HORS. I own, sir, that I do not highly rate the influence of reasoning in political matters, and therefore, that I set no great store by that large allowance of time which is granted to the politican. Most political reasoning is over the heads of the mass of those to whom it is addressed, as, with submission, Mr. Burke, was but too often the case with your own; while that which is comprehensible to their understandings is either superfluous or futile—superfluous if it approves itself to their views of their own interests, futile if it does not.

BURKE. When opposed to the true interests of a country it is not desirable that any arguments should be successful. But it is the function of sound political reasoning to enable men to distinguish between their true advantage and its delusive semblance. Are we really to believe that the skilled and upright political orator is incapable of rendering that service to the State? I have already shown you that I am tempted to accept that view myself; but I feel that to adopt it finally would be to despair of political progress.

HORS. I do not perceive that consequence, sir, unless indeed we are to assume that the people are mistaken as to their true interests more often than not. On the opposite assumption, their inaccessibility to reasonings which (on such an assumption) must of course be more often than not fallacious, would be a proof of political development. May we not say, indeed, that the main result of all political progress is, or should be, to relieve oratory of its functions? Surely the ideal condition of a community would be that

it should perceive its own interests too clearly either to need to be instructed, or to be capable of being misled.

BURKE. An ideal condition in truth! Has it yet been reached in England?

HORS. No indeed! very far from it. We have, in my judgment, receded instead of advancing.

BURKE. May I ask, sir, without impertinence, whether you are a Tory?

HORS. You may ask, Mr. Burke, with all my heart; and I only wish that in the present era of political transition I could answer your question either to your satisfaction or my own. Perhaps I may help myself by asking one of you in my turn. May I inquire whether you are a Whig?

BURKE. Beyond doubt, sir. I was ever the staunch upholder of all the lawful liberties of the people.

HORS. Do you regard it as one among their lawful liberties, then, to exercise political power without any pretensions to political fitness?

BURKE. God forbid!

HORS. It is too late: He has permitted it. But your ejaculation emboldens me to claim for myself the title of Whig. The classes who possess supreme power in England are at present absolutely unfitted to exercise it.

BURKE. And you tell me at the same time that they are impervious to the reasonings of any who seek to instruct them in the wise employment of their power?

HORS. Absolutely impervious: but so indeed was the class immediately above them, from whom they received their power—the enfranchised of 1832.

BURKE. This, sir, is worse and worse: for as I understand you, it is the whole of the English middling-classes whom you now include in your censure. Was the oratory of reason so entirely powerless even wth them?

HORS. I—a—we found it so, Mr. Burke—my friend Mr. Lowe and myself. For two whole years we devoted our whole energies to the endeavour to convince the public of the folly and even the madness of extending political privilege to the uneducated masses of the people: but in vain. Mr. Lowe, in orations of memorable eloquence, appealed to the witness of antiquity against democracies, while I, if I may say so, exhausted every contemporary topic of argument to the same effect. The country, however, turned a deaf ear to us.

BURKE. Then I do not fully comprehend how the step which was then taken can be in your view regarded as a downward one. The classes who thereupon succeeded to political power could not on your own showing have been more unteachable than those into whose inheritance they had entered. The trees cannot do *more* than remain motionless when the political orator attempts to play Orpheus to them.

HORS. Pardon me, Mr. Burke, they can do more and worse. They can dance in the direction of the precipice to the thrummings of another sort of lyre. The English middle-class might be no less deaf to the political counsellor than the mass of the artisan population; but they were far more proof against the arts of the demagogue.

BURKE. What? Is the demagogue a greater power

among the new electors than he was among the old? Now indeed do you astonish me. I had thought that you agreed with me in regarding political oratory (and the demagogue, I suppose, has nothing but his tongue to rely on) as a useless art.

HORS. That, Mr. Burke, was only your own contention. Excuse me for reminding you that I never adopted it. I spoke only of the futility of political reasonings: I said nothing as to the power of oratory over men's passions and prejudices; and in so far as he wields that power, the influence of the political orator in England has, of course, indefinitely increased.

BURKE. You mean, I suppose, that the area of its exercise is wider, and the material on which it works more abundant.

HORS. At once more abundant and more plastic. For one man who, in your own time, could be moved to action through his feelings, there are fifty nowadays with whom, beyond the narrow and ill-defined sphere of personal interest, sentiment is the only motive power. For every degree of heat to which popular audiences could be kindled in your days the pocket-thermometer of the contemporary demagogue will register ten times that rise of temperature among his hearers.

BURKE. Such a state of things appears incredible. Among a community so impressionable the English constitution could not, one would think, have survived. By this time it would have given place to the dictatorship of some great orator.

HORS. It has already done so in all but name. The

English people laid themselves a few years ago, I am told, at the feet of one man—for no better reason that any impartial observer could perceive than that he passionately entreated them to do so—and there they have remained ever since.

BURKE. By the people you mean——

HORS. The popular element in the electorate; for the bulk of the aristocracy, and a very large section of the middle class were, and are still, bitterly hostile to him. It was the plebeian vote which lifted him to power: the vote, that is to say, of a class who a few years before had been loudest in their clamours against him and in their applause of his chief adversary. Yet after a few weeks of electoral campaigning—weeks indeed of unwearied labour and incessant strife, hundreds of miles of travel and almost as many yards of speech—he contrived to convert all this hostility into enthusiastic support: so that his opponents, who up to the eve of the election had disputed with one another only as to the uncertain extent of a certain victory, awoke one morning to find themselves overwhelmed by the most disastrous of defeats.

BURKE. That was oratory indeed! Describe to me the hero of this extraordinary exploit.

HORS. He is a man well stricken in years, but restless, passionate, impetuous as a youth; the most ambitious of all men who ever mistook ambition for public spirit, the vainest while believing himself to be the meekest of men; capable when at the lowest ebb of circumstances of such gigantic efforts to revenge defeat as I have just described to you, and yet not properly to be described as "equal to

either fortune" for he was certainly unequal to the worst. Modest and magnanimous in prosperity, he is in adversity imperious and petulant; accepting success without vain-glory, but resenting failure as a wrong; indifferent to the enjoyment of power, but unable to endure its loss.

BURKE. The qualities you have enumerated are indeed sufficient for the moral equipment of so unrivalled a demagogue; but you have told me nothing as yet of his intellectual gifts as an orator—of the qualities of his mind and style.

HORS. I shall ask your permission, Mr. Burke, to try an experiment upon you in that matter. I should like you, as an orator yourself, to indicate the qualities of mind and speech which one would expect to find in any great master of the passions of the people.

BURKE. They are easily named. The chief characteristics of such a man's oratory would, I should think, be simplicity, terseness, and homely vigour, and his mind of course should be so constituted as to encourage their development and display. His vision of his subject should be intense, but narrow: for since his business is to influence men who habitually see everything in a single aspect, it will be a source of power to him to perceive but one side of a question himself. For the same reason his arguments should be few in number; for the popular mind is bewildered by a multitude of reasons, and is apt to distrust those who employ them. It is only by iteration and reiteration of the same topics with such variety of illustrative treatment as may be, that the convictions of such a tribunal are reached, if reached at all. But the

appeal to passion and prejudices, to the natural desires and hatreds of an untaught mob, is always the more powerful instrument of the two, and what sort of speech this needs is well known. The speaker's words should be plain and few, his manner bluff and honest; he should be the master of a ready humour, the better if a little coarse; and he should excel in the mintage of those telling phrases, the embodiments of a truth or a fallacy, which pass into the currency of the market-place and the workshop, and proclaim the sovereignty of an orator as clearly as royalty is recorded in the image and superscription of a coin.

HORS. My experiment has succeeded to admiration. There is scarcely a quality of mind or of oratory among those you have enumerated which is not represented in our great orator by its direct opposite.

BURKE. You cannot mean me to understand you literally.

HORS. Incredible as it appears to you, I do. Simplicity, terseness, homely vigour, are absolutely antipodean to his style. It is a miracle of involution, and a portent of verbosity; and though far from deficient in vigour one would no more go to it for "homeliness" than to an Act of Parliament. As to the matter of argumentative parsimony, the contrast between the fact and your preconception is more striking still. No popular speaker was ever so lavish of arguments, good, bad and indifferent, so profuse in their production, and so diffuse in their elaboration. He "iterates and reiterates," it is true, but it is the iteration and reiteration, not of one topic, but of

a score; and hence the inordinate length of his harangues. So far from sparing uneducated hearers the labour and confusion of revolving many different ideas, he seems actually to revel in the bewildering abundance with which he pours them forth.

BURKE. Stay, stay sir, for one moment, I beg of you. There must surely be some mistake as to the person of whom we are talking. Such a speaker as you describe could never have risen to eminence as an orator at all. I cannot myself believe that he has.

HORS. What, Mr. Burke? Not when I have told you that he converted a whole people by his speeches.

BURKE. History may perpetuate the memory of the conversion, but the manner in which it was wrought will soon fade into legend. These wonder-working speeches were recorded, I suppose, and are preserved. How then, if his oratory were really such as you describe it, will posterity credit his power?

HORS. That question is easily answered. Posterity will not credit it at all. The future student of English letters will gaze in blank amazement upon pages covered by the convolutions of interminable sentences, and will reject as mythical the tradition that their articulate utterance can ever have stirred a human heart. Coil by coil he will unroll the interplicated mass, and, unable to realise the swift and sinuous charm of its living movement, and its wonder of entanglement ever threatening and ever escaped, he will see no more beauty in it than one sees in the body of a dead snake.

BURKE. What! is the skin then so lustreless? The

hues of many a reptile are as bright in death as in life. Is there no sheen of imagery, no flash of epigram, no gleam of humour, no glow of poetry by which the magic of spoken words may be perpetuated to the eye and mind, when tongue of speaker and ear of hearer have long mouldered into dust?

HORS. None, or almost none. The man is indeed a scholar with a scholar's feeling for style: and the lighter exercises of his pen have even shown a vein of poetry in his nature. But you shall look in vain for any literary quality in his oratory. He is extremely sparing of metaphor, though that to my thinking is no fault; but it were better to have abjured it altogether than to be remembered by the one common-place image which is alone associated with his rhetoric. The Javan upas tree suggested to him—but it is hardly humane perhaps to dissect an orator's only metaphor in cold blood. It savours too much of the allegorical brutality imagined in the parable of Nathan. Yet stay! I wrong him. Of late his admirers here have been reciting to me a new flight of his, achieved since I left the earth, and I admit its remarkable merit. He was speaking of the Christian races of Turkey, and he said of them: "They were like a shelving beach which restrained the ocean. That beach, it is true, is beaten by the waves; it is laid desolate; it produces nothing; it becomes perhaps nothing but a mass of shingle, of rock, of almost useless sea-weed; but it is a fence behind which the cultivated earth can spread and escape the incoming tide; and such was the resistance of Bulgarians, of Servians, and of Greeks. It was that resistance which left Europe

to claim the enjoyment of her own religion and to develop her institutions and her laws." There you have it, sir; it is a picturesque image I admit, one that you yourself need not have disdained, and it has that highest merit of oratorical metaphor, that it is image and argument in one. But—unless we are to reckon that unfortunate upas tree—it is the ewe-lamb, sir, it is the ewe-lamb.

BURKE. But what of epigram, humour, and the other gifts I have mentioned?

HORS. Epigram, sir, as you must surely see, is entirely foreign to the genius of his diffluent style; and of humour he is singularly destitute. He will not even live in the library in virtue of that phrase-making faculty, that aphoristic gift, which you think all popular orators must necessarily possess. Did you not speak of such an orator as able to embody both truth and fallacy in telling phrases which pass into the currency of the market-place and the workshop?

BURKE. I did, and I look upon this power, I repeat, as one of the surest tests of his royal rank, proclaiming his sovereignty as clearly as a coin records a reign.

HORS. Well then, he is a king without a coinage. No one at least has ever seen or handled it. You did not mean, I know, that the phrase-making gift is an absolute and exclusive appanage of oratorical royalty. Many inferior men have possessed it: many a petty baron has so passed himself off for his suzerain. But though all who have it are not kings, no king before this one has ever been without it. He has minted nothing: no gold, no silver piece in our language is stamped with his image

and his name. His words are but the counters of thought, worn smooth and edgeless before he handled them by the attrition of a thousand tongues. Roughly it may be, but still with sufficient accuracy should I sum up the matter if I were to say that quantity and not quality is of the essence of his speech. He conquers as the torrent conquers,—by volume, by volubility, by incessant and resistless flow.

BURKE. But discourses of that kind must surely perplex rather than persuade the unskilled hearer.

HORS. It astonishes, which is better than either. I have already told you, Mr. Burke, that power in England has descended to a class whose favour may be more easily reached through the emotions than the understanding; and the simplest and most primitive of their emotions is the surest to appeal to. It is easier for an orator to open their mouths than their minds; and he who by dazzling dexterity of tongue shall have excited most of that gaping wonder which is bestowed in the fair-booth on nimbleness of the fingers, possesses the greatest power over them. The bumpkin stares to see the juggler draw yards of tape from his mouth: why not to see him produce an unbroken and interminable string of sentences from the same organ? The one is not more beyond the spectator's powers than the other.

BURKE. Nay, sir, this is trifling. Such arts as these can gain but a momentary mastery over even the rudest mind. Men may gape at a conjuror for an idle hour or two; but they would not bestir themselves to vote him into office as a reward for the amusement he has afforded them.

HORS. I did not profess, sir, to be explaining his political power: I was merely pointing out the secret of his oratorical fame. His political power is a product of several forces of which the merely wonder-rousing quality in his oratory is but one. Chief among the others is the curiosity, the interest, and, for the less instructed, the admiration excited by his character and career.

BURKE. But what is it then—nay, what can it be—that should charm them in such a character, if, indeed it be reflected in his oratory? What can they find in such a career as I may suppose that character to have determined?

HORS. In the character they find power, and in the career success; and these are the idols to which human nature, bowing lowest in the lowest, will everywhere bend the knee. The more widely you extend political rights, and the more freely you commit government to the untutored instincts of mankind, the more surely shall you find the dominant influence in politics to be the worship of individual strength.

BURKE. You are of those then who hold that Democracy leads necessarily to Dictatorship?

HORS. Our English democracy of ignorance seems to have already led to it. The man of whom we have been speaking is the virtual dictator of his country: and it is from strength that he draws his strength. *Potest quia posse videtur.* He dominates his colleagues; he rides rough-shod over his own former opinions; he refuses to be constrained even by his own spoken words. But all these characteristics—the imperiousness of his nature, his

audacity of tergiversation, the astonishing sophistry with which he explains himself away—all these characteristics which shock and alienate the scrupulous and the reflective serve only to strengthen that essentially *un*-moral conception of irresistible power which wins him the allegiance of the masses. When he drags the grandees of Whiggery at the tail of the Radical chariot; when he compels an uneasy Legislature to burn what they have adored and adore what they were wont to burn; when he stands up unappalled before the crowding ghosts of his former opinions and lays them with a wave of his enchanter's wand,—his votaries among the multitude waste no thought upon the moral aspect of these performances: all they have eyes for is the magnificent display of force, and before that idol of the modern world they instinctively bow down and worship.

BURKE. And do you really mean to tell me that the astonishing influence of the man has no root whatever in the moral approval, the moral sympathy, of his countrymen?

HORS. Nay, Mr. Burke, I do not say so. It would be at once an unjust and an unintelligent analysis of the elements of his power. I spoke only of the sources of that boundless admiration with which the unthinking populace regards him. He has yet another order of admirers whose attachment to him is based even more upon veneration for his character than upon wonder at his powers. In a word, he possesses adherents who not only applaud him but believe in him—followers who follow him in the spirit of true discipleship, not merely

to gaze upon his miracles, but to hearken reverently to his teachings. Great, indeed, is their faith: great even to the removal of mountains. No paradox of the master's doctrines, no conflict between his utterances, has power to shake for an instant their steadfast belief in his righteousness and truth. They are not staggered by his reconciliatory sophisms, for they see no need of reconciliations at all. They accept the self-contradictions of their master as one of the "antinomies" of the reason, which no more require, if they no more admit of, explanation to the feeble human understanding than does the *crux* of free will co-existent with divine foreknowledge, or the mystery of God-sanctioned evil.

BURKE. But surely, sir, you must be speaking of a class of person almost as ignorant and superstitious as the populace itself.

HORS. By no means. They are mostly men of intelligence: they are all men of high principle and of scrupulous conscience: they are some of them men of deep and unaffected piety.

BURKE. You are merely multiplying incredibilities. How is it possible for such men to be so deluded?

HORS. By means, sir, of that gift of speech which you, I must say, so ungratefully underrate, and by special virtue of one element therein which, though it has as yet been mentioned by neither of us, is to my thinking the real secret of an orator's power.

BURKE. You mean. . . .

HORS. I mean the physical element—the strange magic in the mere sound of some voices, the calculated charm

of their modulation, the magnetism of eye, of expression and even of gesture.

BURKE. And does your orator then possess these things in such high perfection?

HORS. Sir, I can only tell you that profoundly as I distrust him, and lightly as, on the whole, I value the external qualities of his eloquence, I have never listened to him even for a few minutes without ceasing to marvel at his influence over men. That white-hot face, stern as a Covenanter's, yet mobile as a comedian's; those restless flashing eyes; that wondrous voice, whose richness its northern burr enriches as the tang of the wood brings out the mellowness of a rare old wine; the masterly cadences of his elocution; the vivid energy of his attitudes; the fine animation of his gestures—sir, when I am assailed through eye and ear by this compacted phalanx of assailants, what wonder that the stormed outposts of the senses should spread the contagion of their own surrender through the main encampment of the mind, and that against my judgment, in contempt of my conscience, nay, in defiance of my very will, I should exclaim: "This is indeed the voice of truth and wisdom. This man is honest and sagacious beyond his fellows. He must be believed; he must be obeyed." And if such be the effect, however temporary, that this remarkable man produces upon me who distrust him intellectually and dislike him morally, judge, sir, how powerfully he must influence those who bring to him ready sympathies and a confiding mind.

RICHARDSON AND FIELDING.

RICH. Sir! Mr. Fielding! This is mighty ill manners! I would have you to know, sir, that I prefer my own company to yours.

FIELD. I cannot believe it. Death does not so change men's natures. Your known conviviality of disposition——

RICH. Again, sir! You pass all bounds! 'Tis strange that you should suppose yourself entitled to use this freedom with me. Were we on earth I should impute your rudeness to an excitement in which you were said to indulge yourself something too freely.

FIELD. I know you would: and as a backbiter you deserve to be pitied for the loss of so useful a tooth.

RICH. I shall suffer less by my loss, Mr. Fielding, I am well assured, than you will by yours.

FIELD. Perhaps so; but you will suffer in the same way. Tea and tittle-tattle must be almost as bad to go without as a bottle of Burgundy and a rousing catch; though I dare say, by the way, that you manage to get the most favourite of all your drinks even down here.

RICH. I know not what you would be at, sir.

FIELD. There is a beverage which intoxicates more hurtfully than wine and makes a greater fool of the

drinker. Ladies' parlours are its taverns and old maids its tapsters. *You* know its taste, Mr. Richardson,—no man better; its name is flattery.

RICH. 'Tis in vain, sir, that you would attempt by ridicule to make me ashamed of having earned the approbation of virtuous women. If that is your object let me tell you that——

FIELD. That my object, Mr. Richardson! You are vastly mistaken. The praises bestowed upon you by virtuous women, so far from exciting my ridicule, inspired me with emulation. I sought to rival you among the other sex, and began the composition of *Joseph Andrews* in the hope of winning the approbation of virtuous men.

RICH. I marvel, Mr. Fielding, that you should have the hardihood to speak of that offence against morality and good manners. Ah, sir, you have much to answer for in so thoughtless an endeavour—for thoughtless I hope it was—to raise a laugh against chastity.

FIELD. The chastity which a laugh could put out of countenance is not worth much. But for my own part I see nothing more ridiculous in the manly continence of Joseph than in the virginal purity of his sister.

RICH. Then you were unfortunate, sir, in your manner of describing it. *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews*—I speak from hearsay only, for I confess I never had the patience to read the book—did more to divert than edify the town.

FIELD. I am not to answer for the levity of my readers. It is enough to provide them with a serious moral; the seriousness to profit by it they must find for themselves.

Besides, sir, you are setting up a ticklish test of the morality of authors. I have seen an unthinking reader smile over the sufferings of Mrs. Pamela.

RICH. That is like enough, sir. Your acquaintance lay chiefly among those who would naturally make a jest of virtue. A work of morality, however, is not to be judged by its effects on the rake-hells of Covent Garden.

FIELD. No; nor by its acceptance among the precise spinsters of Fleet Street. If the one be beyond the reach of reform, the others are beyond the need of it. I think we may fairly lay both of them out of the account.

RICH. Nay, sir; I may boast at any rate of having confirmed the virtuous in their virtue: while you were doing all that lay in your power to cocker the vicious in their vice.

FIELD. 'Fore Gad, Mr. Richardson, there is one virtue to which you do not seem to show much favour; though the Scripture tells us, I think, that charity is the greatest of them all.

RICH. Charity, sir? Charity? I—I—find nothing to— But no! I was wrong. The warmth of our dispute betrayed me into error. I had no right to charge you with any deliberate design of corrupting morals, and I ask your pardon.

FIELD. Say no more, Mr. Richardson! You are an honest little fellow with all your——

RICH. Sir! Mr. Fielding!

FIELD. Pray excuse me. A warmth of another kind has betrayed me into error. I should have said, sir, that I did not need this proof of your generosity and Christian

spirit. You do me no more than justice, however. I have never knowingly left a line unblotted which I thought could injure the cause of morality, though, I own, I believed I could serve it better by describing men and women as I saw them rather than as I could have wished them to be. After all, Mr. Richardson, we live among realities. It is among them that virtue has to be practised; and I doubt whether it is possible to teach it by examples drawn from a wholly ideal world, where the personages live and move as it were in another and different element altogether. As soon might one understand the art of swimming by watching men perform its movements, belly downwards, on a bowling-green. The men and women of my romances may not all of them swim like Leander, but they are at least in the water, and worth watching on that account.

RICH. Your parable, if you mean to apply it to the most ingenious of your romances, is indeed a rash one. Your hero there is assuredly no Leander.

FIELD. My hero no Leander! (I forbear to laugh, you see, though there are few things more diverting than gravity stumbling on a clench.) No sir; Tom is certainly no Leander: his head is pretty often under water before he contrives to make his way to the haven of his Sophia's arms. But he gets there, however; he does not sink; he swims.

RICH. Swims! Mr. Fielding! Nay, sir, he struggles somehow to land, and that is all. He is a profligate roisterer—I speak from report, sir, for I would not have you to suppose that I have read his adventures—who

is altogether unworthy of the beautiful and virtuous young gentlewoman (as she is described to me) who rewards him with her hand: and what sort of lesson in morality is that, I would ask?

FIELD. No better than life affords us, sir, I grant you that. I never could bring myself to improve upon the instructions which the great Disposer of events vouchsafes to His creatures.

RICH. I grieve, sir, that you should add impiety to license. Providence does not reward the vicious as you have dared to do.

FIELD. What? Do you mean to tell me that all the loose fellows are condemned to marry ugly women? Or is it Sophy's virtue that they have to do without—as indeed they have but too often made shift to do in their wilder days?

RICH. Your talk, sir, is becoming something too free for my taste; but you are only affecting to misunderstand me. The Almighty may well allow vice to prosper in this life, if such be His inscrutable will, seeing that He has the power of rewards and punishments after death: but a writer of romances has but this world to deal with. His judgment-day is in his last chapter, and the good must be rewarded and the evil punished before he pens his "Finis," or not at all.

FIELD. True enough, sir; but if you believe in the infinite mercy of the Supreme Being—you need not interrupt me; I see you do from your manner—you ought not to be so shocked at the leniency of the romancer. He also, if I may say it without irreverence, is a creator:

and none can know so well as he what allowances are to be made for the infirmities of his creatures.

RICH. I have no patience, sir, with such profane trifling. Do you not encourage youth to believe that recklessness and riotous living, dicing and drinking, chambering and wantonness are after all but venial irregularities, and that if a man be bold and open-handed, good-natured, and good-humoured with it all, he shall come to no great harm? And is not that corrupting?

FIELD. Is it more corrupting than life itself? I protest, sir, that I cannot see it. If good and evil impulses be mixed in all men, and if their fellows see that sometimes the good is allowed in this life to atone for the evil, shall we say that those who are rather emboldened by contemplating the impunity of vice than humbled by observing how lamentably it defaces and chequers virtue, have been corrupted by the world? Or that they are self-corruptors? Unless we give the latter account of them, we must declare, as I said but now, that divine mercy is itself an instrument in the demoralisation of mankind.

RICH. You seem mighty well content, sir, with that sophism, but it cannot serve you. I must remind you again that you did not stand towards your characters as a man stands towards his fellow, but on another foot. You were, as you said with too little reverence, their creator, and you were also their judge. Why did you shrink then from making a wholesome example? Why teach young men that vice may escape punishment and even attain to happiness. How can you tell but that many a youth may have been tempted to intrigue with a Lady Bellaston—if that

is the hussey's name—while yet hoping to be rewarded with a Sophia Western at last?

FIELD. Well, Mr. Richardson, and why teach waiting-maids that virtue will always be rewarded by £10,000 a year and a couple of country houses? How can you tell but that many an ambitious abigail, disappointed of becoming the wife of her first amorous master, has jumped at the situation of mistress to the second?

RICH. Sir, I see no pertinence in your question.

FIELD. Do you not? It seems to me very much to the point. I cannot see that virtue is any better served by feigning a false certainty for its earthly prizes, than by teaching men what is strictly true,—that it need not despair of its recompense even though it be mingled with vice. Besides, sir, to come back to my old position, how is it possible for a faithful delineator of human life to do otherwise than I have done? Are not good and evil mingled in life, and are not those who look upon life—I speak not now of boarding-school misses, but of men and women of the world—are they not, I say, perpetually conscious of the mixture? Do they not see too that the tares and wheat—or is it tares and oats? no! wheat—tares and wheat are allowed to grow together until the harvest, and that the tares sometimes flourish a plaguy deal better than the wheat? If they do see all these things in life, they would not recognise the romancer's picture if it omitted them all.

RICH. I am amazed, sir, at the shallowness of such reasoning. Good and evil are indeed mingled in this life, but it is not therefore for an honest and Christian writer to

fling down the things and persons of this world chance-medley before his readers, like so much unsorted goods and leave them to pick out the fair or foul as best suits their taste. It is his duty sir to put them upon contemplating only what is good, and to encourage them to the pursuit of it by showing what advantages it brings.

FIELD. Is that his duty? Then egad, let him throw aside his pen and quit his closet, clap on a cassock and bands and get him to the pulpit, for that, sir, is the proper place for him. Once there, however, he will do better to drop this life altogether, so far as rewards and punishments are concerned, and to seek to fortify the virtuous, and alarm the vicious by dwelling on the comforts of a good conscience, and the agonies of an evil one, on the joys of heaven and the terrors of hell. That, Mr. Richardson, is his business—the business of a man whose concern is with the future world, and not like my own, as I conceived it, with the present.

RICH. I cannot believe it either necessary or right to divide one of these concerns from the other. It was my own endeavour—in which I humbly trust to have succeeded—to write both for a future and for the present world. I was insensible I hope to the vanity of authorship, and deemed it by far a higher honour to have been a teacher of morals than an inventor of romances. But I judged, and I think rightly, that I could do more for morality as a delineator of life than as a pulpit homilist.

FIELD. Why then did you make a pulpit homilist of yourself? Plague take it, Mr. Richardson, a pulpit is but a wooden box, and an arm-chair will serve one's turn as well

at a pinch. You preached sitting instead of standing, and hammered out your periods over an escritoire instead of thumping them out on a velvet cushion. But preacher you were always, and delineator of life, never. I doubt indeed whether you ever saw more of it than could be seen from your shop door: but whatever you saw of it, you never drew it.

RICH. Never drew it! No delineator of life! Mr. Fielding, you are uncivil.

FIELD. Am I? I thought you set so little store by your fame as an author that you would take it as a compliment to be regarded solely as a preacher of morals.

RICH. No man takes it as a compliment, sir, to hear that he has failed in anything which he has attempted. However, I need not allow myself to be vexed by your mean opinion of my writings: nor will I. I thank Heaven that a man's reputation is not to be made or marred to all time by the wits of Covent Garden. There are others sir, besides the coxcombs who were scrambling for the chair of Dryden, to whose judgment——

FIELD. Mr. Richardson! Mr. Richardson! I beg of you to compose yourself. Such earthly trifles as the fame of ingenious authorship are beneath the care of a moralist. Besides, as you have well said, there is nothing which need vex you in the expression of my poor opinion. I never laid claim to the chair of glorious John, out of which indeed I should have first had to hoist a heavy——

RICH. You are right there, sir, and I spoke in forgetfulness. The seat of John Dryden was filled, and well filled, at the time when we two entered the court of letters.

FIELD. Well filled indeed! amply, tightly filled, Mr. Richardson; and by a judge, too, as much your friend as he was my enemy.

RICH. I know not in what sense you can call him your enemy, but I accept with pride the title of his friend. I am prouder indeed of Dr. Johnson's friendship than even of his praise.

FIELD. The one, maybe, had a good deal to do with the other. If report speaks truly you were the greater Samuel's banker.

RICH. I have given no man a right to circulate any such report.

FIELD. Of that I am sure. You were as much too magnanimous to speak of your benefactions as the Doctor was too generous to conceal them. I say that in all sincerity, believe me. Your left hand, I dare swear, would never have known what your right hand had done, had he not come between them and let out the secret. But there it is: you were the great censor's friend in need.

RICH. And what if I were, sir? would you charge one of the proudest and most upright of men with corrupt motives?

FIELD. Not I, faith! The old bear was as honest as one of his own hugs. But then his heart was as warm as his skin, and he was full of goodwill to all who showed him any kindness. You had proved your friendship to him in the most effectual of fashions—by lending him money. With me he had but slight acquaintance, and if we had improved it I should probably have borrowed money of him. What wonder then if his critical foot-rule should have

meted to you a little fuller, and to me a little shorter, measure than we deserved?

RICH. Suppose him then to have been somewhat disbalanced by partiality: he is not the only admired critic who has thought highly of my work. One of the ingenious though, I lament to say, atheistical editors of the Encyclopedia has spoken of me in language which too many will regard as that of extravagant laudation. Mr. Diderot has ventured to compare me with our immortal Shakespeare.

FIELD. Mr. Diderot had better settle the value of that compliment with his friend Mr. Voltaire. For if I mistake not he commends you for that very quality of cultivation in which Mr. Voltaire dared to find our illustrious countryman deficient. But I do not know after all that the Frenchman's compliment is inconsistent with my censure.

RICH. Nay, sir, how can that be? Was Shakespeare no delineator of life?

FIELD. Not in the humble sense in which I lay claim to that title for myself. I studied the men and women among whom I moved, and strove to represent their lineaments with fidelity on my canvas. I drew from the life and with my models always before me. Shakespeare had surveyed all life and had his models by heart if he had cared to work in that fashion. But when he sat down to write he looked within and found there the imaginative types of perfect form upon which he worked. I drew my characters as Reynolds painted his portraits, but Shakespeare created his as Phidias modelled his Jove.

RICH. To what does all this tend, Mr. Fielding? Am I

really to conclude that you are ascribing the superior mode of workmanship to me?

FIELD. You are fluttered, I see, by the mere anticipation; but it is a correct one. You did not study from the life, though perhaps you thought you did, but you had a certain power of imagining types. It was not, I am sorry to say, till I had roundly ridiculed you that I found it out: but I confessed it when I did. For your *Clarissa Harlowe* I had a great value, and you will do me the justice to remember that I was not slow to express it. You possessed deep insight, sir, into the female heart, and in one instance you have most powerfully idealised the wickedness of a man. It matters nothing that neither Clarissa nor Lovelace are representations of any possible human being: they have a truth of their own. I should like to say the same of Pamela, but I cannot. She is neither an ideal waiting-maid nor a real one.

RICH. What, sir, you profess to find no reality in Pamela?

FIELD. My experience of her is in two respects the reverse of Mr. B's. I find her neither of flesh-and-blood, nor resisting to the touch. Come, Mr. Richardson, is there any truth to nature in the preaching little baggage, or in her sanctified parents—hedgers and ditchers with a longer string of long words in their mouths than they had ever had onions. Is there any reason and probability in her restraint by the wicked Mrs. Jukes? Can we believe in the real inability of so virtuous a maiden to escape from so ill-guarded a prison? Or in the sudden conversion of so hardened a profligate as her master?

RICH. I see no great violation of probability, sir, in any of these things. I know not why a squire or a waiting-maid should not comport themselves as they do in *Pamela*.

FIELD. Then take the word of a squire who has had some experience of waiting-maids, that they would not. One would have been less pertinacious or the other more approachable. And what do you think of Lovelace? Do you suppose that the rake-hells of Covent Garden, as you call them, numbered any such audacious and triumphant villain among them as he?

RICH. The selfishness of long self-indulgence, sir, and the insolence of rank and wealth and the visitation of God upon a godless life, may produce, nay, I think they must produce, a Lovelace.

FIELD. Ay, as hatred and suspicion and callous contempt for his kind may produce the undoer of Othello. But for all that, I should not expect to meet with an Iago on the Piazza at Venice, and I can assure you that you would meet no Lovelace at its namesake in Covent Garden. The spot is too near Bow Street for that.

RICH. You mean that—

FIELD. I meant, sir, to remind you that I had been a magistrate as well as a writer, and that in the former of these characters I should have made short work of the most famous of your personages. One of my runners would have laid "Captain" Lovelace and his lawless lieutenants by the heels in a very short time. What! to abduct a young lady of quality under pretence of escorting her to the house of a kinswoman, and then to detain her

for weeks against her will, to say nothing of attempting and finally accomplishing yet worse outrages—and all this to go on unchecked under the very noses of his majesty's commission of the peace! Upon my conscience, Mr. Richardson, your magistrates and constabulary vastly needed a call over the coals.

RICH. On such a matter, sir, you speak with an authority which it does not become me to question.

FIELD. Believe, then, on that authority, sir, that no such man as Lovelace was possible in England in the reign of his gracious majesty George II., and still less so, I suppose, at any time since. Nor do I know whether one could have met with so unredeemed a scoundrel in any country or time. But one may say the same of the blacker villains of Shakespeare; and it does not prevent Lovelace from possessing what I have already allowed to him, a reality of his own. His is a powerfully conceived and awe-striking figure of the Satanic sort, as Clarissa is a most affecting picture in the angelic order of portraiture, and both of them deserved to live. Have I atoned, Mr. Richardson, for speaking of you as no delineator of life?

RICH. You have at any rate said some vastly civil things, sir, and I thank you for them. My regret is the greater that I cannot return your civilities in kind. But I could not honestly say anything in praise of *Tom Jones* —which is—I mean, which I understand to be your masterpiece; and I know you would not have me sacrifice conscience to courtesy.

FIELD. Not for the world, Mr. Richardson: particularly when I should derive so little pleasure from what would

give you so much pain. I will strive to do without your good opinion on my writings, consoling myself as best I may, by the imaginative contemplation of my effigy.

RICH. Hey? what? what say you, Mr. Fielding, your effigy?

FIELD. 'Tis even so, sir. How does your friend the great doctor turn it?

> "See nations slowly wise and meanly just
> To buried merit raise the tardy bust;
> If dreams . . . ."

But what ails you, Mr. Richardson? You seem agitated.

RICH. 'Tis nothing sir—nothing. But I confess I had thought that . . . .

FIELD. You hardly need tell me what. But, plague take it, sir, these empty honours can profit us nothing.

RICH. True, Mr. Fielding, very true—

> "Can storied urn or animated bust
> Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
> Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust?
> Or flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?"

My venerable friend Dr. Johnson thought meanly of Mr. Gray, I remember, but to me he seemed to have considerable merit.

FIELD. He can put unpleasant questions at any rate, if that be a merit in a poet.

RICH. A bust is not wanted by any man who lives in the memory of his countrymen.

FIELD. And useless to any man who does not.

RICH. I refrained, Mr. Fielding, from adding that.

FIELD. Why did you then? It is your own consolation on the want of a statue. You are not mocked, and I am.

RICH. I do not understand you.

FIELD. I will whisper my meaning, so that it may not get abroad: for you keep your court of admirers here, though I do not. They have raised a statue to me, and for aught I know they may raise one to you, but—*they do not read either of us.*

RICH. Great Heaven! You jest, Mr. Fielding.

FIELD. Not now. I have given it up. I did all my jesting on earth, and I fear that my works are suffering for it. . . . . .

RICH. Ah! I perceive how it stands with you, sir. It is as I feared. Your freedoms have excluded you from polite hands. I always somewhat marvelled at the hardihood of the gentlewomen in my own day who could be seen perusing your works. But the neglect of my own romances, which were thought to have done so much for the cause of virtue, is both strange and mortifying.

FIELD. Nevertheless it is complete, or so I am assured on the best authority. They tell me that a young woman would be almost as likely to be seen giggling over the temptations of Joseph Andrews, as fluttering over the trials of Pamela. As to the men, I am perhaps a little better off than you, for some few of them have still a certain acquaintance with me, and the others think it right to pretend it. But for the ladies, Mr. Richardson—well, we must do our best to console each other with the reflection that since they are two straitlaced to relish my romances, they may perhaps be too virtuous to need your sermons.

PETER THE GREAT, AND ALEXANDER II.

PET. Ho! Old Charon! Whom, in the name of the Furies, bringst thou hither? What woebegone and terror-stricken wretch wouldst thou pass off upon me for kin of mine? This the blood of the Romanoffs! . . . . . Come, speak thou! Speak for thyself! What is thy name?

ALEX. Alexander Nicolaevitch.

PET. By Peter and Paul it is he! The son of Nicolas Paulovitch—that right strong Czar and proper man. What a branch from such a tree! Hum! . . . . I doubt . . . . I doubt. Tell me, thou, for I have forgotten, Who was thy mother?

ALEX. The Princess Charlotte of Hohenzollern.

PET. Ha! I know nothing against her—nothing. Yet I would to God I did. It should be the son of some silken chamberlain, who comes thus trembling to the Shades. Have the Czars of Russia indeed grown such cowards in the face of death?

ALEX. No, No! . . . your pardon . . . it is not death . . . . not death itself . . . . but . . . . but . . . the manner of it . . . So swift, so strange, so terrible! Have you not heard, my father?

PET. Heard? not I. It is long since I have sought

reports from Russia. They enrage me too much. But one told me yesterday, thou wast coming hither and I came to meet thee.

ALEX. Yesterday! yesterday! . . . But it was to-day, this very day that they—that I . . . . . From whom did you hear this?

PET. From one Solovieff, a fellow countryman of ours.

ALEX. Solovieff! the man I sent before me, two years ago. And *he* knew—*he* knew what my accursed police on earth were too blind or slothful to discover.

PET. Oh, the fellow wants not for news. Fresh batches of friends from the upper world appear to join him every day. They come by boat-loads at a time.

ALEX. Nihilists and suspects of Nihilism! The shipments of Drenteln and Melikoff . . . . . And to think that with all this they could not save my life!

PET. Speak out, mutterer, in the name of all the devils! What was this swift, and strange, and terrible death of thine?

ALEX. I was cut off in a moment, and by violence.

PET. Hum! ha! an assassination . . . Swift enough, I doubt not: but—strange you call it? Then times must have changed in Russia, or else the customs of our imperial house. The death thou makest all this coil about was good enough for thy grandfather, and for *his* father, Peter III. But tell me, what brought thee to the scarf?

ALEX. To the scarf? Nay, sir, you are indeed at fault. The czars of these days die not by the scarf but by the bombshell.

PET. The bombshell! Thy death, then, was in battle?

Holy St. Vladimir! that a czar of Russia should find aught of "strange" or "terrible" in such a fate! How will my great enemy the Swedish king, he who himself so fell at Friedrichshall, deride me! A Czar, and afraid to——

ALEX. Indeed, sir, your reproaches are unjust. Mine was no death in battle. I fell by the hand of the assassin in the streets of Petersburg.

PET. What? *Outside* the palace! Conspiracy grows bold indeed. Who, pray were the plotters?—Orloffs? Galitzins? Dolgoroukis? let me hear their names. Was thy son among them? Had the Czarovitch a hand in it? Nay, I'll warrant he had. Ah! fool, fool! A Czar who watches not his son deserves his death.

ALEX. You wrong the son no less than the father, and as to our nobles, their plots are no longer those of the palace.

PET. What! Neither Czarovitch nor Grand Duke nor noble at the bottom of such a deed as this? Now the saints grant me patience! Thou wilt not tell me that a Czar of All the Russias has been slain by a nobody.

ALEX. Alas! my father, I would it were so. Better so than that the name of our enemy should be Everybody, and Everywhere his abode.

PET. Thy talk is strange, Alexander Nicolaevitch . . . I would hear more of this tremendous foe of thine.

ALEX. I know not that there is more to say. It is all that my police could ever succeed in finding out. My secret enemy was everywhere—from the capital of my empire to its remotest confines. No place was so near but

that he dared to risk himself in it; no spot so distant but that he hoped to reach me from it. In the ante-chamber of the courtier, in the hut of the peasant, in the barrack-room of the soldier, in the study of the professor, nay, upon the judgment seat of the judge, was my enemy to be found.

PET. Stay! Is this the new madness that I have heard of now and again from those few with whom I have had the patience to talk of Russia? Is it . . . . . is it . . . . how call they the frenzy? Is it Nihilism?

ALEX. Even so, my father. It is indeed that fearful scourge of our race and nation whereof you have heard. It was by Nihilists that I was slain.

PET. Then, by God, thou art rightly served; and the fellows did well to blow thee out of the world to make room for a better.

ALEX. Rightly served!

PET. Ay! for the craze is ten years old at the least, and a Czar who cannot teach or unteach his people what he wills in that time, had best hand the crown over to another and go a-hunting.

ALEX. I strove, my father, God knows with what patience, to purge my people of the poison.

PET. To purge them? to purge them? Ay, that is easily said; and any quack understands how to do it—after his fashion. But what purges didst thou use? The leaden boluses, I will engage. Thou gavest the poor devils a war. It was thy great-grandmother's recipe, and may serve well enough for some kinds of inflammation, but not this, I doubt, not this.

ALEX. Sir, we are not so un-Christian in these latter days as to make war abroad for reasons of state at home. But . . . . but . . . . it did so befall that a war broke out. Divine Providence ordained that a righteous quarrel should arise between ourselves as the protector of the Holy Church and the Ottoman Porte.

PET. Divine Providence befriended Catherine the Great in the same manner; and rewarded her for her instant obedience to the heavenly summons with the gift of the Crimea. What did you get for your championship of the sacred cause?

ALEX. Eastern Bessarabia and a strip of Armenia.

PET. Ha! Is that all? Either the czars, then, are less strenuous servants of God than they were wont to be, or the service itself is a worse one. But what of your people at home? Did the blood-letting pacify them?

ALEX. Alas, no, sir. The fever of disaffection became more acute than ever.

PET. Did I not tell thee that I doubted the treatment? But to give it a chance it must be used as thoroughly as Catherine used it. Didst thou take too little blood from the patient, peradventure?

ALEX. My father, it was poured out like water, both on the passes of the Balkans and on the slopes of Plevna. Three times did my brother Nicholas hurl the masses of our soldiery against the Turkish intrenchments upon those fatal heights; and twice did the fierce fanatics of Osman sweep them back again with the hailstorm of their rifle bullets.

PET. Hum! It sounds like bad generalship, if it was

good surgery. But even this, thou sayest, failed to give thee a contented people. I do not greatly wonder at it after all.

ALEX. There are even those who tell me that the war which we waged against Turkey was actually the means of embittering the discontent of our people. In that province of Bulgaria which we went to liberate from Turkish rule, our soldiers found a peasantry living in far greater comfort than the moujiks whom they had left behind them. The agents of Nihilism in our army were not slow to turn this discovery to account on their return home; and spreading the story everywhere among the struggling inhabitants of our village communes, they prepared the ground but too effectually for their pernicious teachings.

PET. The more fools thou and thy counsellors for having given them such a text. Was there none among you with brains enough to foresee the risk?

ALEX. I was deceived as to the state of the Bulgarian, and as to the mind of the Russian, people.

PET. A Czar of Russia who is capable of being deceived in such a matter as the last, is incapable of rule.

ALEX. You judge me too severely, my father. I was dependent on those about me, and they led me astray.

PET. Dependent! and led astray! Is it a child in leading-strings that I see before me? Didst thou think that God gave thee thy empire—my empire—to portion out among a pack of ignorant bailiffs like the lands of a bankrupt boyard? It was for thee to govern, for thee to watch; and for every hour thou didst spend in sleep, for

every day that thou didst give to idleness the while thy people were murmuring in unnoticed discontent, be well assured, Alexander Nicolaevitch, that thou wilt have to render an account.

ALEX. I shall not fear, sir, to meet my audit. God knows how few have been my days of idleness from the hour when my father died; and as for sleep, conspiracy, which slept not itself, took care that I should not have too much of that.

PET. Then why the devil didst thou make so poor a use of thy waking hours? Thou wilt not tell me that a whole people can go mad before their ruler knows it, unless he is either sot or slumberer, blind or moonstruck.

ALEX. My labours and sacrifices for my people attest my care for their welfare. You cannot have forgotten, sir, the great work by which my name will ever be remembered. Or has it never reached you in the Shades?

PET. What great work, in the name of all that is wonderful? It will go hard with it to be a greater work than has been wrought upon thee by thy enemies.

ALEX. I liberated the serfs! O my father, and father of thy people, as to this day they name thee with blessings even in the poorest hovels of the Russian peasantry! I liberated the serfs.

PET. I know it! I know it! Saints in heaven, man, dost think I am ignorant of that? But what of it? Didst thou do no more than free them from their lords?

ALEX. No more, sir? Nay, what more should——"

PET. Didst thou fill their pockets with money? Didst thou burn down the vodki-shops? Didst thou hang the money-lenders? For every one of these things was necessary, as thou shouldst have known.

ALEX. I set free their hands to work for themselves, and I secured to them the fruits of their labour. What more should I have done?

PET. Thou shouldst have set free their souls, Alexander Nicolaevitch; and until that emancipation was accomplished thou wast only handing them from one master to another.

ALEX. But how, sir, can the virtues of freedom be ever taught to the slave?

PET. Thou hast the cant of thy times at thy tongue's end, I see. . . . How? Why by holding out freedom to them as their reward. Lads are not taught to ride by clapping them upon unbroken stallions: nor is it only a choice between that and keeping them in the nursery. The horse is the prize for proficiency on the pony. What ailed thee to hoist the moujik out of the cradle into the saddle without practice upon so much as a rocking-horse, and set him riding to the devil?

ALEX. I deemed at any rate that I might count upon his gratitude.

PET. What! for such a service? King Solomon might have taught thee better. When did a father ever earn gratitude from a spoilt child? And what of thy serfs' masters, pray? Didst thou expect their thanks as well?

ALEX. From the best of them, I did: and for the bad I cared not.

PET. Tut! there is neither bad nor good to think of when a king is dealing with a great order of his subjects: it is strength and weakness, the useful and the useless, which alone concern him. To free the serf was to destroy the territorial nobility, and to leave the nameless millions of the Russian people face to face with their Czar. Why didst thou kick away thy props without knowing whether thou couldst stand alone?

ALEX. I obeyed the mandate of my heart and conscience; and even here, exiled before my time to the land of shadows, I do not regret it.

PET. No: a heart and conscience like thine has sent many a man to Siberia; and the Czar who has banished them thither leaves them to regret it or not as they think fit. But when thou hadst found thy blessings come back to thee as curses, when thy people had shown that they cared not for the open hand of the benefactor, didst thou not close it the tighter upon the sceptre?

ALEX. The sceptre, my father, was too heavy for my grasp . . . . Nay, sir, be patient: I know not but that its weight would have overtaxed even an arm as powerful as your own.

PET. I would have brained my enemies with it ere I let it fall. Too heavy! and for me! What demon of doubt and cowardice has made thee think so?

ALEX. I will take the risk of angering you, sir, in speaking the truth.

PET. I am glad at any rate that thou hast hardihood enough for that. It is something for thee to face the wrath of a shade. Say on.

ALEX. Know then, my father, that since the days when you ruled in Russia a power mightier than the Czar's has arisen among men. Her servants are stronger than his soldiers, swifter than his messengers, stealthier than his spies, more hidden than his police.

PET. Well, what are her politics?

ALEX. Her politics? It was she I tell you, sir, with whom I was condemned to struggle, and who overthrew me at the last.

PET. Then she is a Nihilist.

ALEX. Alas! yes, my father.

PET. How came that about?

ALEX. How came it?

PET. Ay, thou bungler, how came it about? What ailed thee to fall out with the most powerful subject in thy dominions? If thou couldst not crush her thou shouldst have used her.

ALEX. You know her not, sir. She has no more reverence for the Czar than for the meanest peasant.

PET. What? No more reverence for him who can lay an empire at her feet? If she cannot be bribed she is no woman.

ALEX. Nor is she, sir. I spoke but in parable. Her name is Science.

PET. I guessed it, and there was parable in my answers. Thine enemy was of thy own making. What is there in Science which should make her less the instrument of the ruler than the arts of war? Why else can Czars keep down rebellion save that they have arsenals and armouries, bullets and bayonets, shot and shell, roubles

to clothe and feed and drill the soldier, and to buy the skill to lead him if they lack it themselves? Whereas the trader and the lawyer, the craftsman and the peasant, nay, nowadays even the noble himself, has neither these things nor the wherewithal to provide them, except in desperate disparity with the equipments of his ruler. But if a Czar should see a body of his subjects arming themselves, would he not be beforehand to crush them with his superior strength? And couldst not thou, with learning and laboratories, and a treasury able to spend a rouble for every copeck of thy enemy's—couldst not thou have won over this Science to thy side and turned her weapons against that Nihilism whom thou didst suffer to wield them against thee?

ALEX. Again, sir, must I answer you in the same words; you know her not. She is of the people before everything, and the poorest is well nigh as much her master as the Czar himself. A single desperate man can blast a palace and its inmates to destruction for scarcely more than a workman's daily wage; a dozen such men with brains to conceive a plot, and time to prepare it, and a little money to perfect it, may defy the utmost vigilance of the Czar's police and pierce every barrier of his guards. Ah! trust the words, sir, of one who has given the experiment but too terrible a trial. The monarch of these days is unequal to the conflict with the assassin.

PET. Never was he otherwise, when the assassin was reckless of his life. But this, thank God, he seldom has been; and the conspiracies, therefore, of which thou hast spoken—plots in which the hand is hidden and regicide

goes unavenged—are a new terror to the world. Yet stay! didst thou not tell me that thou wast smitten down in the open streets of Petersburg?

ALEX. It was so . . . . I saw my murderer . . . . close. Our eyes met . . . . for a moment, and then . . . . he raised his hand . . . . and then a flash! a shock! a world all blinding light and agony . . . . and then cold, bitter cold . . . . snow upon my shattered limbs, the ice-cold creeping to my heart . . . . and then dim faces round me, and muttered voices in my ears . . . . and then sleep . . . . sleep . . . . Ah God! my God! what a death to die!

PET. Tush! It is a death like another! Enough of thy feelings. Didst thou *see* no more? No more, I mean, before the fellow flung his bomb, or at the moment of his flinging it? Thy guards! thy guards! were they as dazed and helpless as thyself?

ALEX. No, no! I remember now. I saw them spring forward to seize the assassin ere his lifted hand could let go its missile—too late, too late.

PET. Too late? Why? They must have grasped him the moment after he had flung it.

ALEX. I doubt not that they did.

PET. Then where the devil is thy grievance? It was life for life; and if thou wert not ready—ay, every day and hour to barter life for life with any traitor bold enough to strike the bargain, thou wast unfit for a throne. There is nothing in that exchange which a Czar should fear. I took thee to mean that the assassin, armed by science, could strike in secrecy and safety against his ruler—that

science had made the most cowardly of conspirators a match for the bravest of kings—and that were terrible indeed.

ALEX. And that, sir, is the terrible truth. The manner of my death was what it chanced to be: a public crime which my successor will publicly avenge. But this is nothing to the attempts which I escaped by a hair's breadth—attempts of which the authors are to this day untraced. My death is nothing to the death-in-life of my closing years—a prisoner in my own palace, cut off by beleaguering treason from the world without.

PET. And thou didst submit to that, Alexander Nicolaevitch? Thou didst submit to that? By all the saints in heaven! I wonder that thou darest to tell me so! What, to be cooped up within four walls by plotting subjects, and never to sally from thy stronghold to look thine enemies in the face!

ALEX. Nay, sir, you are again unjust. I made my sortie and you see what came of it. But you do not, you cannot, know the nature of the struggle I was forced to wage. You have spoken of the armies of the ruler, and of the overwhelming power which he wields through them over a rebellious people. But how if there are traitors in the camp? How, if the soldier on whom he relies, is in the pay of the enemy? It was so with me. I could trust no one: neither the sentry in the courtyard, nor the lackey in the ante-chamber, nor the secretary in the closet, nor the valet at the bedside. Treason was in the very air which I breathed. The written menaces of murder found their way to me at every hour, and in every place.

They stared upon me from placarded walls within my palace precincts; they lay upon my breakfast-table in the morning; they lurked beneath the very pillows of my bed. Tell me, sir, oh, tell me, you who have so harshly reproached me with my failure, what in my wretched straits would you yourself have done?

PET. Done? I would have swept the palace clear from the cellar to the garret. If my spies failed to track me out the conspirator in my household—and bribes should have won me traitors' traitors by the dozen—I would have sent the whole crew packing. The mines should have received them all—from the minister of state to the stable-boy, from the ladies of the czarina's bed-chamber to the scullion in the kitchen.

ALEX. And how would you have replaced them?

PET. From the scum of the city if need were. You had resolved to govern by the people and made privilege your enemy in so doing. Why did you not throw yourself upon that people whom you trusted?

ALEX. You have forgotten, sir, the deadliest of my dangers. The people themselves had become estranged. The very traders of the capital, the last to lose their loyalty to a court, were infected with the revolutionary poison. A young Russian girl, of gentle blood and of refined culture, had attempted the life of the chief of my police; and arraigned before a jury of the citizens—men of gravity and substance, orderly and of good repute—she was acquitted of the crime.

PET. Acquitted!

ALEX. Ay, and amid the rejoicings of the people.

Judge now, sir, what inroads disaffection must have made among the people over whom you ruled. Judge now how changed must be their feelings towards their father the Czar.

PET. Changed indeed! changed indeed! Ah, Alexander Nicolaevitch, what hast thou done with my children?

ALEX. It is not for me to answer, sir. It is to fate and history that your question should be addressed. But I must dare to say to you that they found but little work of yours to mar.

PET. How? But little work of mine to mar! Did I not raise the people from barbarism? Did I not give them an army and a navy, and what they never had before, but only the name of it—a government? Did I not teach them arts and industries, and encourage trade with foreign countries, which before was forbidden, and reform their finances, relieving burdens and punishing fraud?

ALEX. All these things you did, sir, except the first. You never raised the people from barbarism, though you taught them some of the arts of civilisation. They are barbarians still. The masses of the people are as dull and brutish as you left them a century and a half ago; and the classes whom you dragged rather than led into the path of Western progress have followed it to a truly miserable goal. They have breathed the atmosphere of the West and it has made them mad.

PET. You talk in riddles, Alexander Nicolaevitch.

ALEX. Nihilism then must serve for the answer. The educated Russian has learnt nothing from the later civilisation of Europe but to babble its phrases and to

dream its dreams, to catch its trick of scoff and scepticism, and to share its shadowy ideals.

PET. Dost thou dare to tell me that all my labours to enlighten them have had no other effect than this?

ALEX. You gave them tools, my father, which they could not use; you opened before them a book which they could not read aright. The former they ply like a child who has gotten hold of a knife,—for mischief and destruction alone: in the latter they see nothing but its pages of confusion and bloodshed.. It is the educated Russian who is the political corrupter of the rude. Nowhere has Nihilism and its doctrines left a deeper impress than on the minds of the professor and of the student. Better, far better, that you had left them in that darkness of ignorance in which you found them! Do you not think so, now, my father? Do you not feel it?

PET. No, by Heaven! not I. Were it to do again I would do it. I would not that Russia should hold aloof from the army of progress, even though in advancing she should tread her Czar beneath her feet.

ALEX. Then I would to God, sir, that you had been as immortal in fact as you are in name. You should have lived to our own day, either to preserve your blessings, if blessings they were, to the Russian people, or if they were curses, to answer for their infliction. Above all, it should have fallen upon you to choose whether now, having put the cry of the conspirators into their mouths, you would answer it by defiance or yield to it.

PET. Never once since we began to converse together, have you told me what that cry may be.

ALEX. They clamour for a constitution, for government of the people by themselves.

PET. He who says that I put that cry into their mouths has a lie in his own.

ALEX. You opened their ears, my father, to the voices which came to them from the West. They have imitated the loudest of them as the mocking-bird mimics the shrillest note he hears: and little more than fifty years from the day when you left them the cry of "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality," was ringing round the world.

PET. I know it; I have heard it even here. Never was there such turmoil in the Shades as there has been since first those words were heard. An endless stream of dead poured down to us day by day rejoicing to shout it as they came. It was years ere this procession of madmen ceased, and Charon's crews once more came crying "Live the emperor!" like sane and Christian men.

ALEX. Alas, my father! The one watchword is but the echo of the other, and each alike is the cry of men who uphold the sovereignty of the people. Should a Czar give ear to it?

PET. Give ear to it? Give ear to it? Thou hast a wondrous knack of hiding away the meaning. To what murmur from his people, however wild and senseless, should a Czar be deaf? Should the nurse not listen to the infant's wailings because they must sometimes be answered with the palm of the hand?

ALEX. I meant not to ask whether a Czar should merely hearken to these clamours of his people. In that indeed he has no choice. Their cries for liberty and self-

government sound ever in his ears. But should they be answered with concession or denial? That, my father, is the awful problem which the Czar of Russia is condemned to solve. Is the sovereignty of the nation to be at last acknowledged by him or is it not?

PET. Art thou demented, Alexander Nicolaevitch, or art thou not? Dost thou mean to ask me whether a Czar should rule, or abdicate, or what dost thou mean?

ALEX. The claim of these conspirators, sir, nay—for why deny it?—the claim of the whole nation, is for representative institutions. They ask that the people shall be empowered to choose a parliament of deputies to make laws for them, to protect their rights, to promote their interests, and to check and limit the authority of their imperial master over their lives and liberties.

PET. Ha! Is that all?

ALEX. Nay, sir, they demand further that the Czar on his part should grant a constitution, pledging himself to respect and to maintain the powers vested in this body of representatives, and to exercise his own powers only in conformity therewith.

PET. Hast thou yet done?

ALEX. The ordering of the finances, the administration of justice, the control of the army and the navy, the levying of war, and the conclusion of peace—these are among the matters in which, if these demands were granted, the Czar would share his authority with his people. Should they, then be granted, yes or no? For myself I have steadily resisted them, and it is my resistance which has brought me here. But there were not wanting men among

my counsellors—men of loyalty and wisdom, of experience and caution—who urged me earnestly and even passionately to submit. There were even those who said that had you, my father, worn the crown in my own day, you would have granted a constitution to the people.

PET. And what didst thou do to those who said it? . . . . . Nothing. I knew it. Nothing. And yet thou pretendest reverence for the memory of thine ancestors.

ALEX. Would you then have refused to——

PET. To fling my crown to the crowd for a football? Ay! Alexander Nicolaevitch, I would! More, I would have knouted the knave or fool of a counsellor who proposed it, and I scorn the degenerate descendant who did not himself repel it with contempt. What! to the people whom thou didst confess but now to be still barbarians—to them, and to the ruin and confusion of their barbarism thou wouldst surrender thy divine trust—the State! There have been kings who have in their lifetime handed down a too heavy sceptre to a son; but never before have I met with one who talked of abdicating in favour of the devil, and yet thought to stand unashamed thereafter before the judgment seat of God.

ALEX. I shrink, my father, beneath your reproaches, for I feel them just. And yet if it were impossible to——

PET. To what? It is never impossible to die at thy post, as thou thyself hast proved. Thine own death, and thy son's death, and the death of thy son's son—what were all these that thou shouldst reckon them against the crime and the disgrace of flight?

ALEX. To die for the nation is of little use. One must

learn to govern them, to reconcile them to their Czar, and to teach them happiness under his rule.

PET. And what has ever given thee the right to say that that is impossible? What hast thou ever done to further it? Answer me! . . . . Nay, silence! Answer me not till I have asked thee this. What hast thou done to purge thy country of the worst of its diseases, and the source of full half its miseries and discontent? What hast thou done to rid it of the ulcer of corruption—that corroding ulcer which has been eating slowly into the vitals of Russia from thy day to mine? Does the judge sell justice to the suitor, does the general rob the soldier, does the petitioner have to bribe his way from clerk to clerk up to the bureau of the minister, as in the Russia of thy father's and thy grandfather's day? . . . . I see the truth. It is so.

ALEX. I have striven, my father, believe me, I have striven, to uproot the evil. But . . . . but it is ancient, it is deep-set, the official class is powerful . . . . adminstrative efficiency is scarce . . . . and—and——

PET. And thou hast given up the work in despair? No wonder that thy people rise against thee. No wonder that they cry out for leave to rule themselves when they see the knaves by whom they are governed. Away! let thy son go flush these foul sewers of the State. Let him cleanse his offices and orderly-rooms, his law-courts and his treasury; and this done it will be time enough to talk of the "impossible" in government, and to think of a parliament of barbarians.

ALEX. But hear me, sir——

PET. No more! I am weary of talking, and of thee; and there will be another here anon with whom I would fain have speech. Russian justice is speedy: it is its only virtue. I need delay no longer to go and meet thy murderer. Wilt thou come with me, that I may see thee face to face with him? . . . . Thou wilt not? Ha! . . . . Farewell then! I will go alone. 'Tis a hardy villain whoever he be; and I have ever loved to look upon a brave man.

STERNE AND THACKERAY.

STERNE. Mr. Thackeray, I am much beholden to you for your civility. But perverse as I am, I have a mind to make you but an ill return for it.

THACK. In what way?

STERNE. By telling you what I am thinking.

THACK. I hope, sir, you do not suppose that I have been doing anything else.

STERNE. I should be sorry to suppose so after the flattering things you have said of me. But to give plain speech in exchange for politeness seems like trucking sand for sugar. I was thinking, then, that since you have such a value for me it is strange you was so long in making my acquaintance.

THACK. To tell you the truth, Mr. Sterne, I did not feel sure that an introduction would be agreeable to you.

STERNE. And why not, sir?

THACK. Well, I have spoken and written about you and your works in a way which it might not be pleasant for you to know of; and—and I thought that you had probably heard of it.

STERNE. Heard of it? Not I.

THACK. What, Mr. Sterne? You have never heard of my *Lectures on the English Humorists?*

STERNE. No, indeed; or I should have remembered them for their queer subject. What put you, pray, upon discoursing of the whimsical part of mankind? I should have thought that a serious man like yourself might have been better employed.

THACK. A serious man, Mr. Sterne! I would have you to know that I was a humorist myself, and in the opinion of many, if indeed I may cite it without vanity, a somewhat remarkable humorist too.

STERNE. You amaze me. I have always heard tell of you as a sane and sober writer, without so much as a single maggot in any corner of your brain.

THACK. Oh, I understand you now, sir. You are using the word "humorist" in its old sense as an "eccentric." It has greatly changed its meaning nowadays, as you will agree, no doubt, when I tell you that among the first of English humorists we now reckon Joseph Addison.

STERNE. What the dev—ahem! You are jesting with me, sure. Joseph Addison a humorist! the stiffest and most demure of men. I would as soon have thought of applying the name to a bishop.

THACK. It will serve to show you, sir, how greatly the meaning of the word has altered. With us a man may be a humorist without any affectation either of personal or of literary eccentricity. He need neither disregard the proprieties of life nor offend against the decencies of language. . . . I wonder how he will take that.

STERNE. I shall not affect to misunderstand you, Mr. Thackeray. It is at myself that your last words were aimed. I begin now to suspect your reason for hesitating to meet me. You have been serving up for your own generation the envious ill humours of mine—ignorant, I suppose, that in so doing you was repeating not the general opinion of the candid, but the calumnies of a few prudish particulars.

THACK. I am afraid, then, that the prudish particulars have so much increased in number as to become the general. *Tristram Shandy* is no longer a book for the table of the boudoir. Our age is more—well, I will say more squeamish than your own.

STERNE. My service to your age, then, sir. You must be ripe for canonisation indeed if Captain Toby Shandy is not fit company for you.

THACK. Ah, Mr. Sterne, the good captain is indeed fit company for the noblest and purest of mankind. But unfortunately—if I may be frank with you—unfortunately you have made him figure in scenes and situations which even the very innocence of his nature tends to render more immodest.

STERNE. But plague take it, sir! the captain was a man. That unlucky bullet in the trenches at Namur was not so——

THACK. There, there, Mr. Sterne. I beg you to check yourself. You are evidently on the point of confirming the most adverse of my criticisms.

STERNE. How do you know that? Why, I vow, Mr. Thackeray, you are as full of unclean thoughts as a

Puritan. 'Tis odd that the noses which profess to carry themselves highest should be always sniffing so near the midden. The old saw has it, I thought, that to the pure all things are pure.

THACK. Old saw! . . . . Heavens! he doesn't know it comes from the Bible and refers to the eating of unclean meats. . . . . As to old saws, sir, you laughed freely enough at *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, but it is not a whit more absurd than "To the pure all things are pure." If the saying were true, a man might walk about the streets in the costume of the South Sea Islanders, and protest against the pruriency of the first constable who laid him by the heels. Purity indeed is slow to suspect the presence of the impure, but there are certain demonstrations of it which are as unmistakable to the intelligence as nudity is to the eye.

STERNE. 'Tis true enough, sir; and I would take it as a friendly act, if you would tell me where, in *Tristram Shandy* or in the *Sentimental Journey*, I appear thus lightly clad.

THACK. You cannot be serious, Mr. Sterne; I should have to cite passages from every page.

STERNE. So many?

THACK. Nay, sir, you know how wayward a spirit was your Shandyism as you were wont to call it. It was an Ariel that had wholly mastered its Prospero.

STERNE. Your servant, sir. We must be thankful for small mercies it seems: and it was obliging of you not to compare my drolleries to Caliban.

THACK. I am incapable of so coarse, and, in some

respects, so inaccurate a comparison. . . . I am not sure as to the shape of Caliban's feet and ears.

STERNE. I would however submit to you, Mr. Thackeray, that the jests of which you are good enough to disapprove do not exactly compose the whole stuff and substance of my works. I succeeded somehow or other in catching the ear of a foolish town with my sentiment, and even judicious critics have declared it to be not altogether wanting in merit. Have I perchance been fortunate enough to escape your censures in that regard?

THACK. I am sorry to say, sir, that the sentimental ingredient in your writings is even less suited than their humorous element to the taste of the present age.

STERNE. Ha!

THACK. We cannot always resist the temptation to laugh with you, though we feel somewhat ashamed of ourselves whenever we yield to it; but I cannot say that we ever feel tempted to weep with you at all.

STERNE. You refuse me your sympathy on any terms, it appears. Neither as Democritus nor as Heraclitus do I succeed in hitting your taste. And yet I suppose you both laugh and weep on some occasions?

THACK. Undoubtedly: and I have already told you that in a somewhat shamefaced manner we occasionally laugh with you. But I do not know that I can recall more than one instance of your having provoked an inclination to weep.

STERNE. Where and when did this surprising piece of good fortune befall me? But it is easy to guess. I have described one scene at any rate which must have touched

even the coldest heart. You have been moved by the story of Maria of Moulines?

THACK. With what emotion, sir?

STERNE. With what emotion? Well, on my conscience, I don't know that I can answer that question if you can't. All I can vouch for is, that I did not *mean* anybody to laugh at it. I concluded that, at any rate, the sentimental part of mankind——

THACK. Ah! There it is, Mr. Sterne. The "sentimental part of mankind!" Pray what was this "sentiment" that you have told us so much about in your various writings?

STERNE. God bless my soul, Mr. Thackeray! Your question is an amazing one indeed. Sure, sir, the word explains itself. Have you no sensibilities?

THACK. That depends upon what you mean by sensibilities. I can be moved to pity of course, if I meet, in actual life, with the objects calculated to awaken pity. So, too, should I be at sight of the sorrows of fiction, if they are so presented to me as to create and sustain the illusion of their reality. But I do not burst into tears at the mere sight of a gentleman in a black coat with neat lace cravat and ruffles, elegantly wiping his eyes with a cambric handkerchief.

STERNE. What, sir, you are to seal up the fountains of your own eyes merely because his are opened?

THACK. Not at all. But I should decline to open them on that account alone.

STERNE. I can scarce believe, Mr. Thackeray, that you find nothing more in my description of poor Maria of

Moulines than a snivelling traveller with a sopping handkerchief.

THACK. Nay, sir, it would be unjust to say that. There is the young woman herself; and her goat; and the pipe on which she played her service to the Virgin; and, let me see, another pocket-handkerchief, her own? No, no; I was forgetting: it was all done with the traveller's. He wiped away her tears with it, and then "steeped it in his own"—and then in hers, and then in his. Upon my word, Mr. Sterne, I almost wonder that the Sentimental One did not go on to treat Maria as we do a crying child—supplementing the process of abstersion by that of emunc——

STERNE. This, sir, may be nineteenth-century pleasantry, but in my own time we should have thought it but ill-bred jesting.

THACK. Pray forgive me, Mr. Sterne! I had certainly no right to push my raillery so far. But you see my point.

STERNE. Indeed, sir, you over-rate my perspicacity. By your account there is something more in the scene than the tears of the traveller.

THACK. Yes, from the scene-painting point of view. But the spectator can see nothing but him and his graceful distress. In fact it is not the sorrows of Maria that he bids us look at, but their effect upon himself.

STERNE. That, I declare, is but playing with words.

THACK. I think not. Your traveller in thus obtruding himself commits a breach of the understanding between him and your readers. He undertakes to touch our hearts

with the sorrows of another, and when we approach him, behold! he thrusts his own sensibilities under our noses instead. You go to work in a different fashion, it is true, with the ass in *Tristram Shandy.*

STERNE. You mean the *Sentimental Journey.*

THACK. Excuse me, I mean *Tristram Shandy.*

STERNE. But the Dead Ass, sir, is in the *Sentimental Journey.*

THACK. I know it, and have no wish to disturb its repose. I did not mean the Dead Ass.

STERNE. Not? It is one of the most affecting pieces of description I have ever compassed.

THACK. Will you think me too plain of speech if I venture to lament that confusion of participles?

STERNE. How, sir?

THACK. I mean in your use of the word "affecting." I cannot but think for my own part that the passive participle of that verb should have been substituted for the active. To be quite frank with you, Mr. Sterne, I should tell you that your Dead Ass of Nampont always seemed to me as unsuccessful as your Maria of Moulines. If I have ever longed to resuscitate him, it was only that he might take her and himself off the scene together. It was the living donkey of Lyons that I had in my mind.

STERNE. Ah! a passable *esquisse!* But, heaven help your taste, Mr. Thackeray, not wrought to anything like the same degree of finish as the other.

THACK. And the more natural perhaps on that account.

STERNE. I know not why it should be. I writ my reflections on the living drudge at Lyons, as I did my

description of the Nampont peasant mourning for her dead companion—only with less painfulness of care.

THACK. You wrote it, Mr. Sterne, from your heart, and from a heart which was sympathetic enough with suffering of all kinds to need no stimulus of so-called sentiment.

STERNE. Sir, your most obliged! But I protest I cannot see why you should find the one passage natural and the other affected. Why not give me credit for sympathising with a heart-broken damsel, as truly as with an over-driven jackass?

THACK. The reader, sir, must take his author as he finds him, and if the author does not make him feel, he is not bound to feign. Tristram's pity in the scene at Lyons seemed to well forth in unbidden tears; but as to your sentimentalist at Nampont, we can almost fancy we see him kneading his eyes with his knuckles in the fashion of the nursery. Come, confess now, Mr. Sterne, were you not thinking more of yourself than Maria when you described her sorrows, and less of yourself than of the ass when you reflected upon his hardships? "Don't beat me with it; but if you will, you may." That touching sentence came straight from the heart; but where is there anything like it in your more elaborate passages of sentiment? I do not say that there is no natural feeling at the bottom of them, but were you not conscious, sir, of having artificially excited your own emotions to a higher than their natural pitch? Did you not affect to be feeling more acutely than was actually the case in order thereby to work upon the emotions of your readers?

STERNE. Well, sir, supposing that were so, where is the harm?

THACK. The harm is in the insincerity—a fault which is fatal to a writer in the estimation of the modern reader. We will not stand tricks being played upon our sympathies. An author who attempts to draw tears from us, merely to display his power, and laughing the while in his sleeve, will nowadays provoke jeers instead. We will not tolerate a writer who affects to feel more than he really does.

STERNE. Or less?

THACK. I do not understand that question.

STERNE. Do you not? I merely ask it in order to learn whether affectations have been altogether driven out of fashion by the uncommon sincerity of your age.

THACK. That, Mr. Sterne, were indeed too much to believe; but I think that at least our literature has been to a very large extent, if I cannot say altogether, freed from them.

STERNE. Sir, I shall rejoice to discover it; but I think I have heard men speak of a certain quality in your writings which must be either the mark—as I cannot believe—of a very evil disposition, or else is open to a little of the censure which you have so liberally bestowed upon my sentiment.

THACK. Indeed! I am not aware of its existence.

STERNE. To be sure, you would be as unconscious of it as I of my own weaknesses. But I refer, sir, to what I have heard spoken of as your "cynicism." Pray what is the meaning of this quality of yours? You stumbled at my "sentiment," and have no right to trip me up with your

"cynicism." I am not a little surprised to come across it in a gentleman of your distinguished sense of propriety. For Diogenes, if I remember aright, was something of a dirty dog, and made no scruple to admit the public to matters of domestic . . . .

THACK. Stay, sir, you mistake. It is not of the shamelessness of the cynic that I am accused, but of his disdain for the vices and follies of human nature.

STERNE. Nay, Mr. Thackeray, we all of us share that sentiment, I hope, in due measure. But is it not the mark of the cynic to mix no compassion with his contempt? to be ever at the same trick of gibing at his unhappy fellow mortals, and to be never in the mood to pity them?

THACK. Well, yes, I suppose that is a pretty correct account of the cynical disposition.

STERNE. And was it yours also, Mr. Thackeray? Had you nothing but disdain for your fellow man? no word of encouragement for his efforts after goodness? or of applause for their success? or of commiseration for their failure?

THACK. Had you lived to read my works, Mr. Sterne, you would scarce ask me such a question. The last accusation which could be brought against me is that of being a hater of my kind. In hundreds of passages of my novels I have humbly striven to do honour to the courage and honesty, the charity and chastity, the affection and self-denial of good men and women, and to hold up these virtues to the imitation of my readers.

STERNE. Truly? Then if any have called you cynic they have maligned you?

THACK. Yes, if they meant thereby to impute cynicism to my nature.

STERNE. But they must have meant to impute it to your nature if they found it in your writings.

THACK. Why so? As a point of style it may——

STERNE. Heavens, Mr. Thackeray! Affectation a point of style! Reflect, dear sir, upon the character of the age for which you wrote—an age that would on no account tolerate insincerity in its writers.

THACK. I cannot admit, sir, that the word insincerity is justly applicable to any literary device of mine.

STERNE. No; no one ever has much fancy for admissions of that sort. But what after all is this "cynicism" which you are for justifying as a "point of style?" Is it not a trick of pretending to laugh when you are really inclined to weep? And how is that better than my own contemptible habit of pretending to weep—sooner, or longer or louder—than I was really inclined to? Surely if it be insincerity to feign more of one kind of emotion than you actually feel, it must be equally, if not more insincere, when you feel one kind of emotion to feign another.

THACK. By no means. Your position, Mr. Sterne, is quite untenable. Were it otherwise, irony and insincerity would be the same thing. To suggest a negative by means of an affirmative or *vice versâ* would be downright dishonesty.

STERNE. Nay, nay, sir, not so fast! That alone is deception which is designed or which avails to deceive. The purpose of irony is understood, and unless when inaptly handled, it never misleads.

THACK. Neither, sir, did the irony of my cynicism mislead my readers. They recognised it as restrained feeling. They understood it as intended to arouse in them the emotions which they felt were only suppressed by me.

STERNE. How was it then that so many thought and spoke of you as a cynic by nature as well as in art?

THACK. I am not to suffer, Mr. Sterne, for the stupidity of some of my readers.

STERNE. Nor I, Mr. Thackeray, from the prejudice of some of my critics. To the best of my poor comprehension, sir, it comes to this; that my public were the more moved by witnessing the flow of tears, and yours by noting their restraint. But that is a pretty foundation on which to base a charge of personal insincerity against me!

THACK. Personal insincerity! I am not aware that I ever accused you of . . . . or . . . or . . . .. at least that I ever based such an accusation against you upon any characteristics of your writings.

STERNE. Oho! So you have accused me of insincerity upon other grounds? Hey?

THACK. I did not mean you to understand me so, sir.

STERNE. That I quite believe; it slipped out without your knowing it. Vastly well, indeed, Mr. Thackeray! So it seems that your virtuous and straightforward generation can prevaricate after all.

THACK. You have no right, sir, to confound common politeness, nay, common charity, with deceit. Since you compel me to say so then, I——

STERNE. Hold, sir, I compel no man to say what I

should not like to hear. Whoever would wound me shall have the credit of managing the whole job for himself.

THACK. But to repel your charge of duplicity, Mr. Sterne, to prove to you that I do not conceal my real opinions, I must needs speak.

STERNE. What, sir, you will thrust your weapon into me now, to prove that you had it not up your sleeve a minute back. But you may spare yourself the pain—or pleasure—of the operation. Give me the knife! Old and rusty as it is I will put it back in the wound myself for this once, to oblige you; and I will beg of you to turn and twist it about to your heart's content. I know full well what you have written and spoken concerning me. You took it ill of me that I felt, "I must ever have some Dulcinea in my head," and you have been mighty censorious upon certain letters of mine, conceived in a spirit of the most respectful devotion, to a lady of good repute.

THACK. It is true, sir, that I regret, as every admirer of your genius must have regretted, these too numerous passages in your private life.

STERNE. What, Mr. Thackeray? when I tell you that the sentiments which I entertained for these gentlewomen were strictly honourable.

THACK. Forgive me, Mr. Sterne, but I cannot allow that that mends matters. The warmth of your language, if it meant nothing, was unbecoming, you must permit me to say, to your position as a married man and a clergyman.

STERNE. If it meant nothing! 'Tis the first time I ever heard, sir, that married men and clergymen were the better

for meaning what they say when they use warm language to strange women. Would you have had me make love in fact, as well as on paper?

THACK. We are not now, sir, upon the virtue of continence, but on that of sincerity. To write impassioned letters to ladies for whom you feel none of the passion which your words express, reveals a lack of sincerity, a levity and artificiality of nature which all honest and truthful men must lament to find in a writer so eminent as yourself.

STERNE. I am vastly obliged to them to be sure, and should be even more so if I could guess the reason for their concern with my character.

THACK. They find something additionally painful too, Mr. Sterne, in your attentions to what you call your "Dulcineas," because of the coldness, as they think it, of your marital sentiments. They suspect you of having neglected your wife; and disapproval of your numerous flirtations, as we style them, was strengthened by sympathy for her.

STERNE. Mrs. Sterne, then, is vastly obliged to them also. She, I dare say, will be as unaware as I was, that our conjugal relations were any affair of posterity's; but a woman will be glad of even a posthumous grievance.

THACK. Your evidently sincere regard for your daughter——

STERNE. Stay, sir! I will beg you to pause there. My feelings towards my Lydia can, I am sure, be no one's affair but ours. But upon my word, Mr. Thackeray, the state of manners appears to have strangely altered between

my own day and yours. There were, in my day, some precisians who found in *Tristram Shandy* what they had no business to be looking for, and who condemned me something too freely in consequence. But no one had the impertinence to write in the *Gentleman's Magazine* or the *Public Advertiser* that the ingenious author of *Tristram Shandy* was on ill terms with his wife, and that 'twas no wonder such a man should write lewdly. Tittle-tattle, sir, of that kind was left to the prints that lived by providing it. A candid critic was thought to have no concern with it.

THACK. Criticism, Mr. Sterne, goes deeper into things in these days. It has more material to work upon than in your time, and better understands the use of what it has. To know the private history of a writer is to enable us to understand much that would otherwise be obscure in the character of his writings. We interpret the author by his life.

STERNE. God save us, Mr. Thackeray! This is ill news indeed! I know not who among us but the very worst can be pleased to hear it.

THACK. The very worst?

STERNE. Ay, sir! In order to escape this critical prying that you tell me of a man must have been so conscious of his faults as to have concealed them from the world. You interpret the author by his life you say. But suppose you know nothing of his life?

THACK. Then we do without the knowledge as best we can. We read him as he would have been read by a man of intelligence in his own day, who knew nothing of him but his name, and we criticise him accordingly.

STERNE. And suppose you know only so much of his life as to deceive you into thinking better of him than he deserved.

THACK. Such a thing as that, Mr. Sterne, is not very likely to happen to a man's posterity.

STERNE. Is it not, sir? Then, by Heaven, I wish posterity joy of its penetration. For I can assure you that the mistake was common enough in my own time with regard to those among whom I lived, and I should have supposed it to be the same in yours. But, however, Mr. Thackeray, it would have been well for us unfortunate authors of a past generation had we known by what rule our writings would have received censure. We should then doubtless have better understood the value of a mask of virtue; and that while the writer who wears his heart upon his sleeve might just hope to shelter himself under a life of obscurity against detraction in the future, the surest way to the favour of posterity was to study the arts of the hypocrite and mix freely with the world.

PAL. He avoids me, and no wonder. I suppose I ought to respect his embarrassment; but I am sorely tempted to—I think I must—by Jove! I will. He was a good fellow at bottom, and will not take a little banter amiss, I feel sure . . . . Mr. Cobden!

COB. Lord Palmerston! . . . . Dear me! This is rather unfortunate. I was particularly anxious not to intrude upon him in his discomfiture. However, if he seeks the interview himself, I suppose I need feel no delicacy in consenting to it. . . . You were about to say?——

PAL. What a limbo of repentance for statesmen, Mr. Cobden, are these same Elysian Fields.

COB. Indeed they are, my lord. . . . Come, that's well at any rate. He seems to retain all his old good humour under defeat.

PAL. You must feel, I should think, like an unlucky tipster on the day after the Derby.

COB. I do not quite catch your meaning.

PAL. Oh, I forgot you were not a sporting man. Well, did you ever watch a game at skittles? If so, don't you feel now as if you were looking on while history plays at ninepins with your prophecies?

COB. Prophecies, Lord Palmerston? My prophecies? I thought you were talking of your own policy.

PAL. The deuce you did? Then that accounts for your good-natured composure. You expected to find *me* on the stool of repentance.

COB. Undoubtedly, my lord; and it was because I was unwilling to add to the natural mortification of such a position that I have held aloof from you.

PAL. Mr. Cobden, I am extremely obliged to you. And now let me tell you that I have avoided you for precisely the same reason.

COB. I suppose, then, that I ought to feel equally grateful to you, but upon my word, I find a difficulty in conjuring up any emotion of the kind.

PAL. Then, sir, you are the more to be pitied: for if ever there was a discredited prophet who ought to feel grateful to any old friend for trying not to catch his eye, it is the distinguished economist and politician whom I have the honour of addressing.

COB. I must ask you to enlighten me further. I am not aware that I was much given to indulgence in prophecy in the upper world. To tell the truth, I found the affairs of the present too absorbing to allow me much time to think about the future.

PAL. Perhaps so, as a general rule. But the interests of the present and the hopes of the future were very closely associated in the great question which inspired you with the prophetic afflatus.

COB. Pray do not keep me in suspense, my lord. Repeat to me some of my deceiving oracles.

PAL. The most impressive I can recall at this moment is from the mouth of one of the attendant priests. The utterance was suggested by the Oregon Boundary dispute, which of course you remember; and this is how the oracle ran:—"Then, without a regiment or line-of-battle ship, without bombarding any town whatever, free trade will conquer the Oregon territory for us, and will conquer the United States for us also—as far as it is desirable either for us or for them that there should be any conquest whatever in the case—Free Trade will establish there all the insignia of conquest!" Do you recognise those words, Mr. Cobden?

COB. No . . . . No, I do not. But I am sure they are not mine.

PAL. The words? No, but the ideas, the views? You are silent. I will go on with my recitation: "When these products come here, and those of our industry return, there will scarcely be a labourer upon the pine forest he is clearing, but will wear upon his back, to his very shirt, the livery of Manchester. The knife with which he carves his game will have the mark of Sheffield upon its blade as a testimony to our supremacy. Every handkerchief waved upon the banks of the Missouri will be the waving of an English banner from Spitalfields."

COB. I recollect it now; it is from a speech of my respected friend, Mr. Fox.

PAL. "Throughout the country there will be marks of our skill and greatness, and tribute paid to us, received not by warriors or governors, not coming directly into the national treasury, but flowing into the pockets of the industrious and toiling poor—refreshing trade and enriching

those who pursue it, giving them an imperial heritage beyond the wide Atlantic."

COB. Yes, yes; it is Fox. I remember it well. But why continue, Lord Palmerston?

PAL. I have nearly done. "Why, they will be conquered, for they will work for us, and what more can the conquered do for their masters? They will grow corn for us, they will grind it and send us the flour; they will fatten pigs for us upon the peaches of their large wooded grounds, they will send us whatever they can produce that we want, and without asking us to put our hand in our pockets in order by taxation to pay a governor there for quarrelling with their representatives, or soldiery to bayonet their multitudes. There is nothing upon earth worthier the name of empire than this; it is a nobler kind of dominion, less degrading both for the one party and the other, less debasing than any sovereignty that was ever won by armies, and, being so won, reluctantly swayed by sceptres."

COB. I owe a debt of gratitude, my lord, to your retentive memory. It was a fine speech, and greatly admired both in England and America.

PAL. The admiration of the Americans then was thoroughly disinterested, for much as they applauded the prophetic orator, they apparently meant not to lend even the little finger of a helping hand to the fulfilment of his prophecy.

COB. Part of it they had no choice but to fulfil. They do not take our steel or stuffs, but they grow and grind corn for us, and send us the flour. We get both their

pigs and their peaches. Indeed, it is literally true that they do "send us whatever they can produce that we want," and if they will not let us send back to them the products of Manchester and Sheffield without first taxing them at their ports, that is their loss, not ours. Mr. Fox may well be satisfied with the amount of fulfilment which his predictions have obtained.

PAL. Mr. Fox must be easily satisfied then. To me it appears to be a case of as nearly total failure as possible.

COB. What? Of nearly total failure? Do you think it nothing then to have been able by our own wise financial policy to lay all the productive wealth of the western world under contribution. You surely cannot be one of those faulty reasoners who hold that we should cut ourselves off from these sources of cheap supply to our wants, unless we can induce our purveyors to let us supply as cheaply some wants of their own. Surely, Lord Palmerston, you are not a Reciprocitarian.

PAL. Certainly not. I leave that heresy to those who have done so much to propagate it—I mean the negotiators of commercial treaties.

COB. I acknowledge the hit, and the more so as it is aimed at a transaction of which I have since learnt to suspect the wisdom. But my negotiations with the French emperor had this excuse, that the conclusion of a commercial treaty seemed the only way of inducing his subjects to make trial of Free Trade.

PAL. Then it was clearly not worth the sacrifice of principle: for, judging by the latest accounts, the results of the experiment are not to the Frenchman's taste.

COB. Its results in France have been disappointing, I admit.

PAL. In France only? Come, come, Mr. Cobden, has the Free Trade gospel prospered anywhere? Is the barrier of protective tariffs breaking down in any part of the globe —in Europe, in America, in Australia? Is it not, on the contrary, frowning more forbiddingly than ever from nearly every seaboard of the world.

COB. I do not—I cannot deny it. It is the melancholy truth. But I confess I cannot see why you should rejoice at it.

PAL. Rejoice at it! How can you suspect me of such a feeling? I am a Free Trader like yourself, and I should welcome nothing more heartily than the conversion of all mankind to our common faith.

COB. If such be really your sentiments, Lord Palmerston, may I inquire why you dwell with so much persistency on our common disappointment? Your choice of a subject which must be equally unpleasant to both of us is scarcely intelligible.

PAL. Scarcely intelligible! . . . . . Oh! come, this is rather too cool of my friend. . . . . I shall have no difficulty, Mr. Cobden, in explaining it to you. It is not quite correct, to begin with, to speak of our "common disappointment." Those only can be said to have been disappointed who have reckoned on something happening which does not happen in fact. Those who have merely wished or hoped that it might happen, without believing that it would, can scarcely be described as the victims of disappointment; and while your place, sir, with respect to this matter is

in the first of these categories, mine is in the second. I hoped, but did not believe that Free Trade would make an instant conquest of the world. You, on the other hand, not only believed that it would, but actually predicted as much and staked your political reputation on the prophecy.

COB. That last assertion is exaggerated: but what you say is, on the whole, the truth. It is the nature of the reformer, I suppose, to be over-sanguine; and the far-sighted must expect to pay the penalty of their powers in having distant objects brought too close to them. The original apostles of Free Trade—among whom your lordship will hardly of course expect to be numbered—are not without excuse for their mistake. We foresaw the springing of the green blade at a time when the seed lay dark and seeming-lifeless in the earth; and we may be forgiven perhaps, for our premature vision of the gathered harvest.

PAL. Forgiven? With all my heart, as far as I am concerned. You have my full forgiveness. I only claimed the right of reminding you that *I* had no hallucination of imaginary wheat-sheaves.

COB. I fully acquit you of it, my lord, and I will talk no more of "our common disappointment." Let each of us content himself with his own; and I wish you may reflect upon yours with as quiet a conscience as I do upon mine. But I hope I shall not seem wanting in charity, if I add that I hardly think that possible.

PAL. May I ask you to explain yourself, Mr. Cobden?

COB. My explanation, my lord, is as simple as was yours just now. It is unfortunate for any public man to misread the future; but what is a mere misfortune for the unofficial politician, may be little short of a calamity for a minister. The errors of the former in general hurt nobody but himself; those of the latter may involve the country.

PAL. Your explanation, Mr. Cobden, is not in one sense as simple as my own. It seems rather to resemble the "easy writing," which is said to be such "hard reading." It does not at any rate possess the merit of throwing immediate light on the matter.

COB. Shall I make myself understood, then, if I say that the delusions of the economist are far less mischievous than those of the diplomatist, and that I at least have not the pain of reflecting that I squandered the blood and money of my country on the superstitions of a Foreign Office.

PAL. The superstitions of a Foreign Office, Mr. Cobden! As for instance?

COB. As for instance, "the preservation of the balance of power." As for instance, "the recognition of our traditional rivalry with Russia." As for instance, "the maintenance of the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire." As for instance, "the exclusion of French influence from Egypt." As for instance—but I suppose that the cited instances may suffice.

PAL. Abundantly, my dear Mr. Cobden. I am only waiting to hear you enlarge upon them.

COB. What need is there of that, my lord? Is there one

of these objects—objects to which you devoted your whole energies throughout a long career—which has not proved to be either illusory in itself, or to have led you into paths of futile policy in its pursuit? You fought to "preserve the balance of power"—which meant, for all practical purposes, to perpetuate the then existing distribution of territory among the greater European States; and what has been the result? The map-maker has been hard put to it to keep pace with the conqueror almost from the day of your death. You fought to hold Russia back from Turkey by land and sea, and to strengthen the Sultan on his tottering throne—and where are these two empires now? The flag of Russia is again upon the Euxine, her foot once more upon the Danube; and one can almost count the years of Ottoman dominion in Europe. You strove your utmost to thwart the engineering enterprise of a Frenchman in Egypt; and you believed that the mechanical success of the project would be the political triumph of France and the political defeat of England. And now, while her commerce pours through the Canal of Suez, in four out of every five of the ships which pass its portals, the power of England is paramount in Egypt, and Cairo is garrisoned with her soldiers.

PAL. I am afraid, Mr. Cobden, that you will regard me as a hardened criminal; but I must tell you that there is but one of these so-called errors which I can admit to be an error at all, and that even for that I cannot severely reproach myself. The commercial advantages which England has derived from the work of M. de Lesseps, I should never have deemed a sufficient compensation for

admitting the French to political rivalry with us in Egypt; and our escape from this consequence was due to an extraordinary combination of chances which no human being need be ashamed of not having foreseen.

COB. But what of Russia and Turkey? What of the policy of the Crimean War?

PAL. You talk as if that war had been of my sole making, whereas I was not at the head of affairs, nor even at the Foreign Office when it broke out. However, I was a member of the Cabinet, and approved of it; and I approve of it still. It was no fault of mine that the country afterwards allowed itself to be bullied by Russia out of one half of its gains, and clamoured by agitators out of the remainder. It was worth one war to delay the dissolution of the Ottoman Power, and it may yet be worth another to determine the succession to its territories.

COB. To such a declaration as that I can make no answer. Your lordship is indeed incorrigible.

PAL. There is room for dispute, you see, as to my errors, Mr. Cobden; while a glance at the returns of imports and exports supplies conclusive evidence, as to yours. But come, sir, let us go to the root of the matter. Let us examine the rival merits of the two theories of foreign policy with which our names are respectively identified, and consider which has best stood the test of events. The "preservation of the balance of power," the "recognition of our traditional rivalry with Russia," are mere incidents of the foreign policy which I pursued; let us look rather at the essence. Its essence was the

maintenance of the position of England as a great European Power, with an authoritative voice in the settlement of European questions, and—as a means to that end—the sustentation of her military and naval strength at such a point of potency as would secure an acknowledgment of her position, and a hearing for her voice. That was my foreign policy. What was yours? It may be expressed in the one word "non-intervention." Its essence was the withdrawal of England from continental affairs, the abdication of her place as a great Power, and the reduction of her military and naval establishments to the minimum necessary for the defence of her own coasts, leaving her colonies, which you did not value, and her commerce—which I presume you did value, though you conveniently left it unnoticed—to shift for themselves. Both policies have, according to our droll national fashion, been tried in turn. Which, I ask you, looks now the wiser of the two in the light of events?

COB. The inquiry is idle. It is not a question of wisdom between the two, but of practicability. It is a sufficient reply to you to say that if your policy had been pursued with consistency, England would now be maintaining a conscript army of something like a million of men. The race of continental armaments——

PAL. Not so fast, Mr. Cobden. The race of continental armaments did not begin till England had ostentatiously withdrawn from continental affairs. It may well have been because my policy was *not* pursued consistently, that that disastrous competition arose. But I will concede, for the sake of argument, that it would have arisen in any

case; and I will ask you what sort of commentary it pronounces upon your own expectations. Is this the beating of the swords into ploughshares and of the spears into pruning hooks, which you promised as the result of a universal adoption of Free Trade?

COB. I thought we had done with my errors, Lord Palmerston, and were now upon yours.

PAL. Ay, but the error in your forecast of the commercial future was highly material to the question of foreign policy. It was because you anticipated a mercantile millennium that you under-rated military and naval needs. But be that as it may; and let us allow too, if you like, that my own aims for my country would have proved unattainable so far as concerns the position which I sought to maintain for her in Europe—let us admit, if you will, that in the natural course of events she would have been compelled to consent to a decline of her authority in European questions: but what then? This is far from exhausting the statement of the issue between us. Let us return to the question of colonies and commerce—to the question of our empire beyond the seas. How would the policy which you advocated have availed for the protection of the interests which these phrases recall to mind?

COB. I do not perceive that the interests which you speak of would have suffered by the adoption of my policy.

PAL. But do you not perceive that the opinion of your countrymen, if not the evidence of facts themselves, is against you? Do you not perceive that, in necessary

conformity with its resolve to maintain its empire, the country has been compelled—yes, compelled—to abandon its attitude of abstention from the affairs of Europe, and to enter upon a career of positively open rivalry with the nearest of its continental neighbours?

COB. I do indeed perceive that the nation has taken that course; but it is for you to convince me of its necessity.

PAL. Pardon me; it is for you to convince the nation to the contrary. Come, Mr. Cobden, you are too practical a man not to understand that politics is not an art to be practised by theorising *in vacuo;* and that no principles can be sound, no advice good, except relatively to the instincts, the resolves, the prejudices, if you like to call them so, of the people to whom they are addressed. If the people of England had been prepared, or could within any period of time worth taking into account have been induced to consent, to the loss of their empire, the principle of your foreign policy would have been sound, and your advice good. But seeing that the contrary proposition was and remains true, the one is unsound and the other bad.

COB. And do you yourself believe, my lord, that this immense, unwieldy, everywhere vulnerable empire of ours, with its ever-increasing demands on a limited population and a not unlimited exchequer, can be indefinitely retained? Do you think it possible?

PAL. That, my dear Mr. Cobden, is a question the discussion of which we may well reserve as an employment for eternity. It is enough to say that the English people

have not yet been brought to regard it as an impossibility ; and you went, therefore, the wrong way to work in counselling them to disable themselves for the defence of possessions which they do not, as yet, doubt their capacity to retain.

GARRICK AND GEORGE HENRY LEWES.

GAR. Nay, sir, I cannot let you entrap me into an argument till you have first satisfied my curiosity. You, who have come fresh from the world of life and its doings, may be excused your appetite for philosophising; but I, for my part, am anxious to hear and converse about men and women. If you are for talk of the other sort, and will not tell me about living players and living plays until you have determined the first principles of the dramatic art to your satisfaction, I must needs hand you over at once to Mr. Diderot.

LEW. The determination of first principles will keep, Mr. Garrick—nothing so well, to the best of my experience. Indeed I have known those who held that such questions might well be left to hang in the larder of Philosophy till everything more substantial in its contents had been discussed. I shall be pleased, sir, to gratify your curiosity as to stage matters to the utmost extent of my power.

GAR. Sir, you are most obliging; but after all I fear that it is but little you can do for me in that particular, although, as I am told, you were a frequent playgoer and an ingenious critic. Yet what can description do for the actor? The voice, the tone, the gesture, the quiver of the

lip of sorrow, the sunlit face of mirth, the lightning-flash of the eye from beneath the thunder-laden brow of anger —how can these things be described, Mr. Lewes?

LEW. Not easily, sir, I own, when the portrayal of them is as vivid as yours. I am not sure, though, I regret to say, that my own poor powers of description are not fully equal to the mimetic gift of some of our modern actors.

GAR. Believe it not, sir, if I may be so uncivil as to say so—believe it not! Take my word for it, that true dramatic intelligence may learn more from watching the poorest mime that ever tore a passion to tatters, than from listening to the most watchful critic's description of the noblest actor that ever appeared upon the stage. Even mistakes of which we are eye-witnesses have more instruction than great feats which we know only by report. I mean no disrespect, sir, to your descriptive talent.

LEW. You need not excuse yourself, Mr. Garrick. It should wound no man's vanity to admit that his faculty of expression could not hope to keep step with your powers of observation. But I regret the more, sir, that you are no longer in a position to exercise them upon the performances of the English stage. It has now an actor well worthy of your study.

GAR. *An* actor, sir?

LEW. Is there ever more than one who, at any given period, engrosses the attention of the town? Even if he be not really unapproachable by any others, as in your case, the world of playgoers will raise him on a pedestal to make him so. In this instance, however, it is fair, I think,

to say that though the artificial exaltation has been effected, it was not required. Whatever we may think of Mr. Irving in the comparison with his great predecessors, he could afford to descend from his pedestal without risk of being jostled by any of his contemporaries. There would be a clear space round him even on level ground.

GAR. I think I have heard mention of the name. But in what respects does he so far surpass his rivals?

LEW. I will note the most important first. He has the power of exciting the most vehement disputes among the most cultivated persons concerning the merit of his impersonations.

GAR. Do you consider that so clear a mark of superiority?

LEW. Surely yes, sir, for intelligent people will never argue warmly about anything which does not interest them deeply. And deeply to interest such people in a dramatic performance, implies of necessity that the actor must have attempted the impersonation of characters which are of general interest to the intelligent, and that his conceptions of them must have been strikingly imagined and skilfully executed.

GAR. Do you, then, find these qualities in his impersonation of the characters of Shakespeare? for that I think is the truest test.

LEW. In these especially. I say this with peculiar impartiality, because many of his renderings of Shakespeare I confess are not to my taste. But I must confess also that in none of them has Mr. Irving's conception offended me, either on the one hand by the mechanical

following of tradition, or on the other by mere clap-trap of deliberate eccentricity. There are the marks of careful study and independent judgment on all of them. The actor never keeps to the beaten track without having convinced himself by reflection that it will lead him aright, or departs from it without having plausible reason to allege for his deviation. Performances of this kind will never lose, and never ought to lose, their interest for men of thought and culture, and I trust they may never fail to win popularity as well as respect for any actor to whom we owe them.

GAR. I trust so too—always supposing, at least, that the execution of them is worthy of the conception. But on that matter you have yet to speak

LEW. And I feel it difficult indeed to do so. Of how many great actors could it be truly said that their execution is worthy of their conceptions? I am speaking, I know, to one of the few of whom this could be said, to one whom nature—in giving him the eye to trace the minutest physical manifestations of human character, and the sensibilities to sympathise with the subtlest emotions, and the brain to combine and co-ordinate the whole in a coherent and consistent personality—endowed also with a face the ever faithful mirror of the changes, of the mind and a voice the unerring interpreter of its moods.

GAR. Sir, your most obliged! On behalf of my face and my voice, my eye and my brain, I thank you heartily for your civility. Mr. Diderot will have something to say to you on the propriety of including my sensibilities; but

in the meantime I commend your discretion in having left out my figure.

LEW. Nay, Mr. Garrick, you might have silenced the silly taunt to which, I suppose, you make allusion with the pretty reply of Rosalind. You were the Orlando of your countrymen, and your stature was at least "as high as their hearts."

GAR. Your application, sir, is as pretty as the reply. You are pleased to be flattering, Mr. Lewis, to my poor inches, but for my part I cannot think that a low figure is anything but a disadvantage to an actor.

LEW. 'Tis surely a lesser one than excessive height. An actor shall more easily make us forget the former drawback than the latter: and, indeed, two of the greatest actors of the century succeeding yours were little men. Stature may help an Othello, perhaps, but shortness does no great dis-service to a Richard, an Iago, or a Shylock; nor, I think, even to a Hamlet or a Macbeth. I will allow, however, that a golden mean is the happiest in this as in many other matters.

GAR. And how does your famous actor stand in this respect?

LEW. He exceeds but not greatly, the middle height, and carries himself when in repose, with distinction and dignity. But he does not move with grace, and our witlings make merry—or rather make themselves merry; since such jestings cannot for ever divert the thoughtful —with the spare dimensions and the somewhat ungainly motions of his legs.

GAR. What of his face?

LEW. His face is by no means wanting in mobility; but it suffers in some respects, if it gains in others, from a too strongly-marked individuality of cast. It may seem like a paradox if I say of it that it is too expressive in repose.

GAR. The phrase certainly requires explanation.

LEW. An actor's face is the tablet upon which he is to write the message of his mind to the audience; and it cannot but disadvantage him that it should bear upon it certain characters of nature's inscription which, if indelible, will confuse the actor's own writing, and if effaceable, need to be effaced before a plainly legible palimpsest can be made.

GAR. I am not sure now that I catch your meaning.

LEW. An illustration will make it completely clear. I have often diverted myself, Mr. Garrick, by studying the delightful series of character-pictures of yourself in the London club which bears your name, and in comparing them with the best of the portraits painted of you in your own person. And in seeking to discover how one human countenance could have displayed such Protean powers of self-transformation, I came to the conclusion that it was because your face exactly represented the unwritten tablet of which I have spoken.

GAR. Truly? Then upon my word, Mr. Lewes, this squares the account of a good many pretty speeches. So my countenance was vacant and inexpressive in repose?

LEW. I was prepared, sir, for that sally: but of course you are only affecting to misunderstand me. Your

countenance was expressive in the highest degree; but when we so speak of a face we mean only that we find or judge it to be quickly responsive to changes in the mind, not that it is habitually suggestive of any particular mood. It is this latter characteristic, I say, which is a disadvantage to an actor; and, considering that it is his business to give prompt expression to all moods, it obviously must be so. Now your own portraits, Mr. Garrick, show the countenance only of an alert-minded, and highly-intelligent man. The eyes are bright and piercing, but one cannot call them either grave or mirthful. We feel instinctively that the mouth is of extraordinary pliancy and mobility; but it is neither sad nor merry, nor meditative, nor contemptuous, nor stern. The face is rather round than long; but it no more suggests comedy by its breadth than tragedy by its length. With Mr. Irving, however, the case is exactly reversed. The face is long and melancholy. The deep-set eyes look gloomily forth from a sombre brow. A disproportionate length of upper lip and a downward set of its corners gives an unconquerable air of sternness to the mouth. Hence the precise results which we should expect. In the depiction of the sterner passions, in the portrayal of wrath, of horror, of melancholy, of sullen savagery, of despair, Mr. Irving is at his best, and his best is extremely good. But in the expression of love, of pity, and, in a word, of the softer passions in general, he is not, for he could not be, by any means so successful. In comedy—except where comedy arises from the unbending of a grave nature or has to be

associated with a real or affected stateliness of bearing—he is seriously hampered by the peculiarities of his face; and it is the more credit that he should be, as in all but facial expression he is, a comedian of remarkable merit: impersonating, as I am told, even a character so purely light-hearted as that of Beatrice's lover, with indisputable success. But, warmly as I hear this praised, I shall be slow to believe that a face so "marked and quoted by the hand of nature" to express the melancholy humour of Jaques, can ever have adequately rendered the unclouded gaiety of Benedick.

GAR. You have said enough, Mr. Lewes, to convince me that, whatever be the actor's facial disadvantages, he has combated them with great address. But tell me now of his voice.

LEW. Of that, sir, I shall speak with more reluctance: for in that respect I can scarcely claim for him the credit which you have just now allowed him. He labours here under natural disadvantages which he has been less successful in overcoming. Here again he is sometimes at odds with himself and with the character which he is representing. His deep tones lend themselves well to the expression of the anger, the horror, or the melancholy which his face so well expresses; but in tender utterances his voice lacks tenderness, and in impassioned declamation, it is wanting in resonance and volume. A voice, however, which is thus deficient in melody and compass requires on that very account to be the more carefully disciplined to a just elocution; yet his delivery even of poetic monologue leaves much

to be desired. Of his treatment of poetic dialogue I should hesitate to speak with unqualified disfavour: for I do not profess to have solved the problem of enabling the foot of Colloquy to move freely and naturally in the fetters of metre. But I take leave to insist that a great actor is bound to solve that problem somehow for himself. After all, the characters of Shakespeare converse for the most part not in prose, but in the most musical poetry which it was ever given to the human voice to utter; and the actor, whoever he be, can be allowed no license to mar that noble music out of mere determination to keep clear at all hazards of a too declamatory style.

GAR. I must own, Mr. Lewes, that with all your skill of description you leave it difficult for me to comprehend this actor's great popularity. An intractable face, a voice without charm, movements without grace, a faulty method of elocution—it seems strange indeed that in spite of all this array of shortcomings he should have attained such remarkable vogue.

LEW. I am quite conscious, Mr. Garrick, of the inadequacy of my attempt to set him before you, and I more than ever feel the truth of your observation on the inferiority of the describer to the eye-witness. Could you yourself see Mr. Irving act you would have little difficulty in understanding the attraction which, despite all defects, he exercises over his audiences. His acting has that mysterious quality which for want of a better name we are accustomed to call the "sympathetic." It must originate no doubt in some hidden magnetism

operating between the sensibilities of the actor and those of the spectator.

GAR. Oho! sir; you are there, are you? Nay, if you begin to talk of sensibilities I must indeed hand you over to Mr. Diderot. He has some startling things to tell you on that matter.

LEW. His theory will not startle me, sir, for I am already familiar with it.

GAR. Ay, truly? How is that?

LEW. Many years, sir, after you "eclipsed the gaiety of nations" these speculations of Mr. Diderot's to which you refer were given to the world. We have long been familiar with the original version of *Le Paradoxe sur le Comédien*, and it has, I hear, been excellently Englished a little while ago by one of the most accomplished of our younger critics, and published with a preface of protest against the author's dogma from the very subject of our conversation—Mr. Irving himself.

GAR. I have heard Mr. Diderot expound these views of his in familiar talk, and I doubt not that they are only more fully set forth in his published work. What do you think of his *Paradoxe?*

LEW. Why, sir, that it is a paradox indeed. Not content with maintaining that the dramatic effect of a representation derives nothing from the personal emotion of the actor—a proposition for which there may be much to be said—he will have it that mere sensibility, the capacity of experiencing emotion, is a limitation upon the actor's power.

GAR. Does he indeed go so far as that?

LEW. He does: and to me it appears no less absurd to say that a man will be the better actor for being destitute of sensibility as to say that he will be the better surgeon for being without pity for human suffering. Till pity ceases to unsteady his hand, he will not be a surgeon at all; and never will I submit a limb of mine to him until he has learnt to slice away at it as callously as a Chinese executioner; but why he should be a worse operator for thinking afterwards of my sufferings with compassion than if he jingled my guineas in his pocket and dismissed me straightway from his mind, it passes my comprehension to conceive.

GAR. Mr. Diderot was wont to make much of the argument that actors—or most actors, for he was obliging enough to except me—were worthless folk; and that if they had to depend upon their own moral emotions to assist them to represent the noble and dignified personages of tragedy, they would fail miserably, instead of, as many of them do, succeeding admirably.

LEW. The argument seems to me to rest upon a confusion between sentiment and conduct. It is by conduct alone, where the world has information of it, that character is judged; and conduct is ultimately an affair of the will, and not of the emotions. Why then should Mr. Diderot have inferred from the fact of an actor's habitually behaving in real life like a coward, a trifler, or a profligate, that he cannot imaginatively sympathise with heroism, gravity, or self-control? Probably he persuades himself through his ready emotion that he really possesses these

virtues, just as the tyrant fondling his lap-dop imagines that he has a tender heart.

GAR. Do you, then, go so far in the other direction as to maintain that a man cannot be an actor *without* sensibility?

LEW. I confess I cannot see how he can be a great actor without it. It is not as though Mr. Diderot regarded acting as a mere trick of clever mimicry. He does not imagine the actor talking to himself somewhat in this wise: "At this point I perceive from the poet's language"—though indeed he will not always be able to perceive even this without sensibility, so apt are your poets to leave things unsaid which they mean to be felt—"that he intends me to feign anger, fear, jealousy, merriment, or what not; and I must therefore try to recollect or actually go and study in the persons of others the characteristic grimaces which distort the face of the angry, the terrified, the jealous, or the hilarious man, together with the attitudes, the gait, the pitch and intonation of voice which are peculiar to each: and having studied, mimic them to the best of my power." No, our critic does not suppose the actor to go to work in this mechanical, monkey-like fashion; far from it. He holds, on the contrary, and very justly, that in order to compass anything like a great impersonation of a a great part, it is essential that its intending impersonator should begin by forming a complete conception of the part; and that when that has been thoughtfully and imaginatively done, the passions peculiar to the character will no longer seem as if they had been copied by the actor from those of some person in real life, but will appear as natural manifestations of the idealised

personality. And how this ideal conception is to be framed without the assistance of sensibility, or in other words, of sympathy with the poet whose meanings he seeks to embody, is another of those puzzles with which this philosopher so plentifully supplies me. He warmly praises your own conceptions of character, Mr. Garrick, but does he suppose that you could ever have formed them if you had not possessed a quickly responsive heart as well as a vigorous brain? Inconsistently enough, too, does he suggest this idea, for listen to the way in which he contradicts himself in the course of this apostrophe: "I take thee to witness, Roscius of England, celebrated Garrick; thee who by the unanimous consent of all existing nations art held for the greatest actor they have known! Now render homage to truth. Hast thou not told me that despite"—mark this, I beg you—"despite thy depth of feeling thy action would be weak if, whatever passion or character thou hadst to render, thou couldst not raise thyself by the power of thought to the grandeur of a Homeric shape with which thou soughtest to identify thyself?"

GAR. I do not recognise my own language, but I perceive the contradiction to which you refer. He who denies sensibility to the typical actor has stumbled into ascribing "deep feeling" to the man whom he professes to regard as the greatest actor in the world. You have no need, however, to labour this part of your argument further. It is clear that our friend has tripped in forgetting that sensibility was necessary, on his own showing, to the conceptions of the actor, however much it may mar his execution. Let us pass on, however, to the latter point;

for there is greater plausibility in his view that the so-called gift of sensibility is an actual hindrance on the practical side of the art. I must own, indeed, that for my own part I am apt to think it is.

LEW. You astonish me, Mr. Garrick. Surely it is not sensibility itself, but the absence of control over it, which is mischievous. Do you really believe that you yourself would have been a better actor without it?

GAR. I cannot say; but I know that the first care of an actor is to eradicate it, and that till he succeeds in doing so, he is nought.

LEW. If you would say "suppress," instead of eradicate, we should agree.

GAR. It is something more than suppression. An actor who had emotions to control would be unable to give his mind as wholly to his acting as he must needs do if he is to command his audience. No, sir, 'twill not do for him to behave merely like a man of fortitude in real life, who does no more than conceal the agitation which tragic events excite in him. The mimic catastrophes, pitiful or terrible, amid which the actor plays his part, must cease to move him at all.

LEW. What, Mr. Garrick, is the agony of Othello, the guilty dread of Macbeth, the maddening perplexity of Hamlet, to be wholly unshared, even in imagination, by him who is impersonating them?

GAR. Why how, sir, could it be otherwise? Ask yourself what it would be to bear the burden of any of these three men's souls even for a single night; and how could an actor do so night after night and live?

LEW. You have mistaken me. I never supposed it possible for him to merge his own personality entirely in those of the characters he plays, or even often or for any long time together to forget himself in them. I quite admit that acting is, and must always be, for the most part a mechanical process. But the effect which it produces under these conditions represents, I hold, the minimum and not the maximum of its power. The good actor must never suffer himself to fall below it; but he will not be great unless he rises above it. It is upon the care and skill which he bestows on what I may call the "unfelt" passages of his impersonation, that depends his power of maintaining that grave and uniform level of emotion among the audience which keeps them ever ready to respond to his greater efforts. But I repeat, though of course, sir, with submission to your superior knowledge, that unless and until he can display an ability to raise himself at times, and to lift his audience, above this level, he will never pass that line which divides the "great" actor from the merely "good."

GAR. And you think that it is sensibility which enables him to accomplish this feat?

LEW. I do.

GAR. But, at this rate Mr. Lewes, the performance of a great actor must always be unequal. It would be finer, or at any rate more impressive, at one moment than at another.

LEW. And so it is, sir, and always will be. The bad actor with fine "moments," whom we justly condemn, is condemnable not on account of his moments, but on account

of his badness,—though of course it is true that the greater the height the worse the fall, and his exaltation of his audience at one instant makes his descent into bathos more shocking at the next. I submit, however, that the great actor must take these momentary flights like the little one. True it is that when he alights again we find him on a lofty table-land, and not at the bottom of a ravine; but there has been a rise and descent, all the same. Surely, Mr. Garrick, it must have been so with your own acting? The emotions of your audience could not, in human nature, have sustained themselves permanently at that topmost pitch of agitation to which you were sometimes able to raise them, Surely, sir, you must have moved them more deeply at some moments than at others?

GAR. That, no doubt, was so, with me as with all actors. But whence, pray, do you infer that the emotion of these moments is produced by the tragedian's own sensibility, and not merely by his temporary exertion of greater, but still unimpassioned, skill?

LEW. I infer it from this; that the "moments" are not always—I might almost say—not often the same on one night as on another, and that very frequently they are *not* those at which the action of the drama makes the greatest and the most acknowledged demands upon the actor's skill. As to the first phenomenon, it is familiar of course to every playgoer. We all know that a Hamlet shall move his audience more one night in the play scene, than in the closet scene, and that the next night the case shall be reversed. But the second fact is of course the more

significant of the two; I mean the fact that the actor's "points" and his "moments" do not coincide. Take the case of Othello. The murder of Desdemona, and the remorse, despair, and suicide of her deluded husband, form of course a climax upon which the actor is bound to employ, and for which therefore he is bound to reserve, even through the storm and stress of the terrible third act, the very best of his powers. He cannot, he must not fall below himself in the murder and self-murder scene: and if he is a good actor, he does not so fall. He must, if possible, rise above himself; but, though a great actor, he does not always so rise. We may see and hear him through this act to the close of the drama, with adequate emotion: but nothing in it, after all, not even the unspeakable tenderness of that,

> "O balmy breath that dost almost persuade
> Justice to break her sword,"

or the dread solemnity of that.

> "When we shall meet at compt
> This look of thine shall hurl my soul from heaven,
> And fiends shall snatch at it,"

not these, I say, may have renewed the thrill which ran through the playhouse, at some perhaps inarticulate cry of rage and torment, wrung from the great brute gladiator as he sank to earth at the feet of Iago Retiarius, fast in the toils of death. In other words he has moved his audience more by what could not have been a greater, and may well have been a slighter, exertion of his

"unimpassioned skill" than he put forth when he moved them less. How does this square with the theory that acting is a mere affair of unimpassioned skill from first to last?

GAR. But ill, perhaps; yet, does it prove that sensibility is the secret of these greater dramatic effects?

LEW. Surely, yes; for what but sensibility remains to explain them? Take this case, familiar enough to every critic of the drama. You have gone to see a new actor in a great tragic part, and you have composed yourself to watch and listen to him in what I hold to be the true critical attitude of the heart: not, that is to say, inviting his appeal to the emotions, but ready to respond to it,—not steeled against him, for that is unfair to the actor, but not softened towards him in anticipation, for that is to take some of his work off his shoulders. Well, he arrives at his great scene, and you are gazing and listening, satisfied, but not more than satisfied, stirred perhaps, but only moderately stirred, when, on a sudden, without warning or preparation, some sentence of the actor, some word it may be, falls upon the ear, some look, some movement, some gesture, strikes the eye, and it is as though an icy hand had grasped you, and your heart stands still. Will you tell me that this is nothing but the result of a momentary exaltation of the actor's mechanical powers—powers which had previously been strained to all appearance to the utmost without producing this effect, and continue so strained without repeating it? It may be so; but for my part I cannot believe it? I shall always explain this marvel to myself by supposing

that at the moment of its occurrence, the peculiar passion of the scene—its grief, its terror, or its fury—has seized with unwonted power on the actor's sensibilities, and passed, unconsciously perhaps to him, into his face and voice.

GAR. You have well supported your theory, Mr. Lewes, but you must not think that my silence means your victory. Those who practise an art are unaccustomed to pay attention to its inward processes, and are often ill at explaining them. I would fain hear you argue the matter with M. Diderot.

LEW. I shall gladly do so, sir: but I would not have you expect that, after having held my own against your experience, I shall yield to his theories.

LUCRETIUS, PALEY AND DARWIN.

LUC. It is enough: I would leave you. I go to sit at the feet of my master Epicurus, from whom men first learnt to shake off the chains of superstition, and to see in the universe the frame and fashionings of eternal matter. Why would you detain me?

DAR. I would detain you, Lucretius, to question you further upon your doctrine of atoms.

PAL. And I to learn from you how you reconcile your presence here with your theory of the materiality of the soul.

DAR. Nay, Dr. Paley; it is surely rather for us to reconcile those powers of speech which we are now exercising, with the theory of the immateriality of the soul. So long as we retain such powers we must certainly account our nature to be in some sense material. For all that we speak of ourselves as disembodied spirits, our life in the Shades can be only a continuation under physical, if highly etherealised, conditions of our life on earth.

LUC. Thou art right, O greatest of the philosophers; and it doth in no wise shake the Epicurean argument that we have prolonged our conscious existence for a certain period beyond its terrestrial span.

PAL. I perceive, then, that you are incorrigible in your atheism, and that we must await the time appointed by God for its correction and chastisement. Do you, in your impious audacity, accept those terms of maintaining it?

LUC. I could not decline them if I would.

PAL. Ay, but I mean do you accept them confidently? Do you accept them without misgiving?

LUC. If I have rightly judged of the Divine nature the gods will concern themselves as little with my atheism as with any other of the affairs of men. If I have judged wrongly of it, I know not what that nature is, and I cannot tell, therefore, whether the gods are any more likely to punish atheism than to reward it.

PAL. You had no reverence even for the gods whom you imagined.

LUC. Had I not? Yet I thought I spoke of them with awe. I find nothing at least of irreverence in this:—

> "Omnis enim per se Divôm natura necesse est
> Immortali ævo summâ cum pace fruatur,
> Semota ab nostris rebus, sejunctaque longe;
> Nam, privata dolore omni, privata periclis,
> Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri,
> Nec bene promeritis capitur, nec tangitur irâ."

Nor is this, I think, a contemptuous description of the blessed calm of their abodes:—

> "Apparet Divôm numen sedesque quietæ
> Quas neque concutiunt venti, neque nubila nimbis
> Adspergunt neque nox acri concreta pruinâ,
> Cana cadens violat; semper que innubilus æther,
> Integit et large diffuso lumine ridet."

PAL. The lines, adapted, by the by from Homer, are certainly elegant. But I have never denied you the praise of an ingenious poet. Your condemnation, however, will be the heavier on that account.

LUC. Do the gods then hate good verses?

PAL. No; but they love not those who abuse good gifts. Your very skill in composition ('tis the same word "condere" both for the building up of a poem and of the universe) should have taught you to believe in the Divine Artificer of things. How would you have liked the men of my time to refer your own hexameters to a "fortuitous concourse of dactyls and spondees"?

LUC. I should not, at any rate, have punished them for their error; though I am more concerned about my fame as a poet than the gods seem to be about their reputation as architects.

DAR. May we not say too, Dr. Paley, that posterity would have thus much less excuse for their scepticism that they are familiar as a matter of experience with the fact that poems originate in human design?

PAL. Were you a poet yourself, Mr. Darwin?

DAR. Not I, indeed. I spent my life in scientific inquiry.

PAL. There was a namesake of yours whom I remember as the author of some pleasing verse.

DAR. He was my grandfather, sir; and I am glad his poetical compositions met with your approval. But why did you mention him? Were it not that you have praised verse so clear and intelligible as his, I should have feared that you were about to question my theory as to the origin of poetry.

PAL. Its origin in what?

DAR. In human design: for I must own, sir, that I sometimes find a difficulty in tracing modern poetry to any such source. The concourse of the words composing it too often appears to me, at least, to be purely fortuitous.

PAL. I should, nevertheless, hesitate for my part to infer from the absence of any marks of human purpose that such poetry is of divine origin.

DAR. I exercise a similar caution, Dr, Paley. But let us return to our great poet here—for I think you admit his greatness—and see how your argument has affected him. What says he to it?

LUC. That it is trifling with the matter. We have experience of men composing poems, but no one has seen the gods at work upon the universe.

PAL. What need of that? No one but your acquaintances ever saw you at work on the *De Rerum Naturâ*, but no one doubts that it was written by a man; and if you say that they reason from the analogy of other poems which they know in fact to be the work of intelligence, I answer that really the same analogy is to be found in the works of creation.

LUC. If that is your argument I have misunderstood your theory. I did not know that you believed the world to be the work of an intelligent man.

PAL. It is you, Epicurean, who are trifling now.

LUC. Why, what more does the argument prove?

PAL. Much more. The contrivance which we see in nature is like in kind to the ingenuity of an intelligent man, but infinitely greater in degree; and hence we infer

that the world is the work not only of a designing mind, but of a mind whose designs are distinguished by superhuman skill and wisdom. There is a perfection in the arrangement of the Cosmos which would have been unattainable by the devices of man.

LUC. I do not agree with you.

PAL. What? You are speaking impiously.

LUC. It cannot be impious to rebuke impiety; and what impiety could be more daring than to impute imperfect workmanship to the hands of the all-perfect gods? If the gods had really planned and executed the visible frame of things it could not show so many signs of the artificer's having stumbled in his work. I see nothing of that perfection of arrangements of which you speak; on the contrary, I find many things ordered after a fashion which, so far from denoting cleverness infinitely above the human, appears rather to point to an intelligence somewhat below that standard.

PAL. I know what you are aiming at now, but your suggested argument from the imperfections of nature can be easily answered. I wish it had been possible for you to read the twenty-sixth chapter of my *Natural Theology*.

LUC. I wish it had been. Is the poem in hexameters?

PAL. It is not a poem at all, but a prose dissertation; and I have therein proved, to the satisfaction of all who are not blinded by their presumption and the hardness of their hearts, that the world is the work of an infinitely wise and benevolent Being.

LUC. Was it the wisdom, then, or the benevolence which created the presumptuous and hard-hearted?

PAL. Your question only raises the old problem of the existence of evil, which I have very fully dealt with towards the close of my twenty-sixth chapter. I do not believe, however, that the apparent imperfections in nature have ever yet been the cause of atheism, however often they may have been alleged as its excuse. Once convince mankind, as I endeavoured to do, that the world is the work of a Supreme Intelligence, and the immense preponderance of good over evil in its arrangements will speedily persuade them that those of the latter character constitute only apparent deviations from an essentially beneficent plan.

DAR. You rely, in fact, Dr. Paley, on their recognising, in the words of the *Essay on Man*, that "all discord" may be "harmony half-understood, all partial evil universal good."

PAL. Hum! I should be loth to adopt every theological statement of Mr. Pope's; but the lines you quote sufficiently express my meaning. The great matter is to demonstrate the divine wisdom and power as displayed in the scheme of the universe; a conviction of the divine justice and goodness will follow afterwards. Indeed, I would almost go so far as to say that Theism must, in my opinion, stand or fall with the design-argument.

DAR. Forgive me, Dr. Paley, for questioning the discretion of so famous an apologist; but surely—surely it is not wise to stake so much upon a single proof.

PAL. I did not expect you to think it so, Mr. Darwin. You are in much the same case, I am afraid, as our Epicurean poet here.

DAR. I do not know that I have any reason to resent that imputation, sir; but neither do I know what right you have to make it.

PAL. One who has employed himself, as you have, in attempting to destroy the doctrine of final causes, must of necessity——

DAR. Excuse my interrupting you, Dr. Paley, but it would be fairer to describe my work as I myself describe it. I assure you I never conceived any animosity against the doctrine of final causes, and I did not go about to "destroy" either that or anything else. My aim was not destruction, but discovery.

PAL. 'Tis ever the infidel's plea, Mr. Darwin; though, if the name offends you, sir, I will ask your pardon for having applied it to you.

DAR. I do not take offence at names, Dr. Paley, and I should never even repudiate one, however offensive, which I had justly earned in the search after truth. It would be a penalty of my calling which I should be ashamed to shirk. But whether it *is* a just one or not it is for you to consider.

PAL. Your tone makes me uneasy, sir; I trust I have not unwittingly transgressed the law of charity; but, if so, I am sufficiently rebuked by your dignity and meekness. You were, however, about to describe your own work.

DAR. It was, as I have said, discovery and not destruction. Perhaps I shall best prevent mistakes in future, as to the aim of my researches, by quoting to you the title-page of my principal work. Its subject is described as

The Origin of Species by Natural Selection; or, The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life. In that description, sir, you cannot, I think, detect any preconceived hostility to the doctrine of final causes.

PAL. Nevertheless, your inquiries led you to its overthrow—or to what too many people regard as such; and I was about to say that any man who arrives himself, and who lands others, at such conclusions as yours, must needs, I think, regard the Deity, if he admits the existence of such a being, as the sect of the Epicureans regarded their shadowy gods.

DAR. Again, then, I must reply that I know not by what process you arrive at that conclusion yourself, and I am sure that it is one at which you should not wish to land others. For, suppose, Dr. Paley, that you yourself should see reason to reject the doctrine of final causes, would your own theology at once become Epicurean?

PAL. I cannot entertain the supposition upon which your question is founded. The teleological argument, as I believe you now call it, appears to me to be absolutely irrefragable.

DAR. It is natural that it should, considering the ability and learning which you devoted to its support. I am constantly tempted, after the years of labour which I spent upon it, to regard my own hypothesis as equally beyond all possible reach of refutation. But I know how many scientific truths, supposed to be ultimate, have been found to need revision; and I have always endeavoured to keep my mind open to all attempts at correction.

PAL. I applaud your candour, sir, but, considering the

nature of your conclusions, you would be gravely culpable if you displayed less. As the advocate of opinions which, even if erroneous, would be less dangerous to human welfare (upon an average of happiness in both worlds), I do not hold myself bound to the same amount of circumspection. Nevertheless, I have ever been ready, for the satisfaction of my own mind, to consider anything which can fairly be urged against my argument. And if I now dismiss what I understand to be your hypothesis explanatory of the appearance of design in creation, it is merely because I had anticipated and refuted it in my *Natural Theology*.

DAR. Indeed, Dr. Paley? You make me ashamed of the inattention with which I must have read you.

PAL. I fear that the refutation I speak of has but too generally escaped notice. The opposition between our two theories may, I think, be most concisely stated thus. According to mine the organs in an animal which are adapted to a useful purpose must have been designedly given him in order to enable him to exist; according to yours, their existence and his are only two aspects of the same fact. While I ask, How should these organs be found in the creature, unless a creator had specially designed him to live? you on the other hand ask, How could this creature be living unless somehow or other he had come to be provided with the organs? Do you admit that to be a fair account of the difference between us?

DAR. Yes, reduced to its lowest terms.

PAL. Then mark, if you please, how in the fourth paragraph of the fifth chapter of my *Natural Theology*,

I have anticipated your theory. "There is another answer (to the argument from design) which has," I say, "the same effect as the resolving things into chance, which answer would persuade us to believe that the eye, the animal to which it belongs, every other animal, every plant, indeed, every organised body which we see, are only so many out of the possible varieties and combinations of being which the lapse of infinite ages has brought into existence; that the present world is the relic of that variety; millions of other bodily forms and other species having perished, being" (mark this), "by the defect of their constitution, incapable of preservation or of continuance by generation." There, sir, you have your hypothesis, and here is my reply. I point out that "there is no foundation whatever for this conjecture in anything which we observe in the works of nature;" that "no such experiments are going on at present, no such energy operates as that which is here supposed and which should be constantly pushing into existence new varieties of beings. Moreover, I argue that neither are there any appearances to support an opinion that every possible combination of animal or vegetable structure has formerly been tried."

DAR. Oh! as to that, Dr. Paley——

PAL. One moment, sir, if you will be so good. I remark that "multitudes of conformations, both of vegetables and animals may be conceived capable of existence and succession which yet do not exist;" and that if we did not see "unicorns and mermaids, sylphs and centaurs, the fancies of painters, and the fables of poets realized by

examples," we might at least have "nations of human beings without nails upon their fingers, with more or fewer fingers and toes than ten, some with one eye, others with one ear, with one nostril, or without the sense of smelling at all. All these," I contend, "and a thousand other imaginary varieties might live and propagate. We may modify any one species many different times, all consistent with life, and with the means necessary to preservation, although affording different degrees of conveniency and enjoyment to the animal. And if we carry these modifications through the species which are known to subsist, their number would be incalculable. No reason can be given why, if these deperdits ever existed, they have now disappeared. Yet if all possible experiments have been tried they must have formed part of the catalogue." Does not that answer you, Mr. Darwin?

DAR. Indeed, sir, it answers me, and something more; for it refutes more than one proposition which I have never advanced. For instance, I pretend to no theory as to the number of conceivable varieties of being—the number of "possible experiments" which have been tried. My hypothesis had work enough to do in dealing with the varieties which already exist, and it seemed to me that my business lay rather with the surviving species and the cause or causes of their survival, than with those which have disappeared.

PAL. Be it so; it only affects a subsidiary point in the argument. The main thing is, sir, that I anticipated your famous discovery, and showed it, with submission, to be a discovery of something which did not exist.

DAR. Nay, Dr. Paley, the real fact is that you have misapprehended the nature of my work. I am not at all anxious to arrogate to myself the exclusive credit of the guess—for at such a stage you cannot call it a hypothesis —that existing species may be simply the survivals from a larger number of pre-existing species; nor do I even claim an inventor's property in the far more fruitful thought, that the surviving races of animals and plants must owe their existence and their peculiar adaptations of structure to a gradually acquired fitness for the conditions by which they are surrounded. The former of these ideas has probably floated vaguely through many inquiring minds at all periods of the history of science; the latter in a more or less indefinite form was in the air at the time when I began to write, and took distinct shape in the mind of another naturalist almost simultaneously with its realisation in my own.

PAL. Then where, pray, sir, is the mighty credit of your achievements?

DAR. What services, you mean, have I been able to render to science? Well, just the services, I hope, that any fairly intelligent and zealous servant would have been able to render in my place. It is in the testing, the illustration, the confirmation or correction of hypotheses, Dr. Paley, that the true work of the scientific inquirer is performed. Less fortunate than the theologian, we are not able to discuss our subject without moving from our arm-chairs. Our phenomena, unlike his, are within reach of us; they lie outside our study windows, and summon us to examine them. As much if not more of my work was

done without my pen in my hand as with it. By actual study of the behaviour of plants and animals under domestication I strove to satisfy myself not only as to the reality of my hypothetical process of development, but as to the exact mode in which it operated. Assuming, in other words, that existing species owed their survival or development out of preceding species to their acquisition of a superior fitness for their environment, I set myself to inquire into the how and the why of this fitness being acquired.

PAL. But how, sir, could you possibly bring so vast an inquiry within the compass of investigation by experiment.

DAR. It is a long story, Dr. Paley, and I must ask you to take it on trust from me that my inquiries powerfully confirmed my hypothesis. And that hypothesis I should tell you, was considerably more definite than the one which you claim to have refuted by anticipation, and which indeed I can hardly call a hypothesis in the scientific sense at all. To conjecture that the organs of animals seem designed for their respective uses because only animals possessing such organs have survived; or even to add that the cause of the disappearance of all other animals is a "defect of their constitutions, rendering them incapable of preservation or of continuance by generation," —to conjecture thus, I say, is not to offer a scientific hypothesis explanatory of the facts. For how could the truth of so vague a guess be tested? No scientific hypothesis has been framed until we have assumed the operation of some general law which would tend to protect or redeem certain species from these destructive "defects of con-

stitution," so that while other species perished they should be "capable of preservation and continuance by generation."

PAL. And do you really imagine yourself, Mr. Darwin, to have discovered such a law?

DAR. In common, sir, with most other observers of nature, I had remarked the tendency of all species to slight variations from the normal type; and by experiments designed expressly to that end I more fully demonstrated, what the less methodical proceedings of breeders had gone some way to prove before, that it is possible by selecting and propagating examples of these variations, to produce varieties of a single species which shall differ more widely from the parent stock than many distinct species differ from each other. Assume now that any one species were in the wild state, to develop a variation which should give it a slight advantage over its competitors in the struggle for existence—some peculiarity which should make it better able to find, or gather, or store its vegetable food, to perceive or pursue its prey, to descry, to flee, or to conceal itself from its enemies—and the operation of natural causes might then be expected to do for such an animal what is done for the domesticated creatures by the designing agency of man—perpetuate, that is to say, and develop these useful accidents of structure, until we find a world of creatures abounding in those exquisite adaptations of means to ends which fill my mind, Dr. Paley, no less, believe me, than they filled yours with abiding emotions of reverential wonder.

PAL. I am at a loss to understand, sir, how, as you

interpret them, they could inspire you with any sentiments of the kind. But, be that as it may, I can only say that the explanation which you give of these phenomena would be fatal, if I were to adopt it, to the survival of any such sentiments in my own bosom. I cannot but regard your hypothesis, Mr. Darwin, with an invincible repugnance.

DAR. I am truly sorry to hear it. I can see nothing in it to deserve such a reception even from the most sensitively religious mind.

PAL. Its ingenuity I fully admit, and though objections to it have already occurred to me, I have too much respect for your manifest sincerity, and the care which you have obviously bestowed upon the subject, to state them to you until I have well weighed them myself.

DAR. Then I earnestly trust, Dr. Paley, that you will give me the full benefit of them hereafter. The idea that I may have overlooked some argument against my theory, and thereby lost some opportunity of correcting or confirming it, would fill me with uneasiness even here.

PAL. The more I reflect upon your hypothesis, the more convinced I am that it is destructive of the religious instincts.

DAR. Reflect still further upon it, sir, and you will find those instincts not only revived but strengthened.

PAL. Nay, Mr. Darwin, how can that be? It strikes at the root of belief in the providential government of the world.

DAR. If providential government suggests only the idea of the capricious, arbitrary, and spasmodic authority of an

Oriental despot, then I agree with you: if not I dissent from you wholly.

PAL. Why, does not the selection hypothesis cover, from the nature of the case, every conceivable instance of what was believed to be the Divine forethought, the Divine ingenuity, the Divine benevolence?

DAR. Add, Dr. Paley, that it also covers those instances in which theologians have been sorely put to it to escape the necessity of ascribing not forethought but blindness, not ingenuity but unskilfulness, not benevolence but malice, to the Supreme Being; and that surely is no slight advantage to religion.

PAL. I doubt whether your theory secures it, sir, any better than mine: but the instances to which you refer are in our case the merest fraction of the whole. And what I have said of the multitude of others is simply true. Every conceivable example of intelligent design may be represented as an example of automatic selection. Every beautiful and artificial structure, which I say has been expressly bestowed upon an animal by the Deity to enable him to live, you assert him to have fashioned for himself in the effort to prolong his own life. Your theory, while it is the exact converse of mine, is absolutely coextensive with it.

DAR. Necessarily so, Dr. Paley; for your hypothesis claimed, I presume, to account for all the facts; and if mine did less than that, it would not be a hypotheses at all.

PAL. And do you mean to say, sir, that there are no facts which conflict with it?

DAR. Irreconcilably, or rather in such a way as to make ultimate reconciliation incredible, none: but it would be disingenuous to pretend that there are none which suggest difficulties—none which at present refuse to take their place among the details of the scheme. Still, the facts which confirm the evolution hypothesis, so enormously exceed in number, and for the most part so materially surpass in significance those which appear to militate against it, that I have always held, and hold at this moment, an unshaken belief in its truth.

PAL. I cannot but hope that Providence may bring to light some overwhelming refutation of it. To me personally it would be a cruel chagrin to discover that one of the chief labours of my life was lost, and that the edifice of faith which I was at so much pains to construct, was founded on an imaginary basis. But you will not suspect, Mr. Darwin, that I am biased by personal considerations, in believing, as I do firmly believe, that your doctrines are fraught with the most mischievous consequences to mankind.

DAR. Did I believe so myself, I should welcome the destruction of my own life's labours by the overthrow of my theory. But I cannot myself perceive the mischievous consequences which you find in it.

PAL. What, sir, does it not abase the dignity of the universe, and extinguish those feelings of awe and admiration which must precede all religion?

DAR. Most emphatically must I answer, No. On the contrary, I contend that it exalts that dignity, and invigorates those feelings. To my mind, I have written,

my theory "accords better with what we know of the laws impressed on matter by the Creator" than does yours; "and when I view all beings not as special creations, but as the lineal descendants of some few beings which lived long before the first bed of the Cambrian system was deposited, they seem to me to become ennobled." And as to feelings of awe and admiration, I have said and I repeat that I find an especial "grandeur in this view of life with its several powers having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that while this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been and are being evolved."

LUC. You have debated learnedly, O philosophers, and the skill of your arguments is apparent even to me, who hold with neither. The gods, I am convinced, are not the artificers of the world; but if they have created, they assuredly do not regulate it.

PAL. You see, Mr. Darwin, that I was not far wrong in confounding you with the Epicureans. This poet's ready acceptance of your hypothesis as the sole condition on which he would consent to qualify his blank materialism will show how narrow is the interval which divides you.

DAR. What you call narrow to me seems infinite. For such I think is the difference between him who postulates and him who rejects a supernatural origin for the material universe.

PAL. Theoretically it may be so, but in practice it is quite otherwise. The mass of mankind will never be able

to reverence a Creator who has withdrawn Himself from the conduct and control of things from the moment of their creation onwards. How, think you, will they be able to distinguish such a Deity from the Epicurean gods? Nay, how essentially would He differ from them in fact? For one moment only in eternity has He been otherwise, and ever since, His existence has been like theirs—

Semota a nostris rebus sejunctaque longe.

Are you sure, Mr. Darwin, that blind mortals who go thus far in negation will not soon learn to add that last despairing line of the Epicurean's creed, and say of Him, whom they should regard as the righteous Judge of all their words and actions—

Nec bene promeritis capitur nec tangitur irâ?

DAR. We have ceased to hold, Dr. Paley, that the religious beliefs of men are greatly influenced by speculations on the origin and development of life upon the globe. Alike among the most powerful and the most pious minds of my time, the conviction had gained ground that man must look within him for his religion rather than without.

PAL. 'Tis very well to say so, sir; but what, pray, will he find within him to reward his search? A conscience? And if so, by whom implanted, and by what means developed? Is it in the struggle for existence that men have learnt their duty to their neighbour, and that the virtues of charity and continence, of probity and mercy, have gained their footing in the human soul?

DAR. Out of the struggle for existence was born the tribal instinct, and this in turn has been the parent of those self-protecting qualities which are as necessary to the survival of the tribe, as are strength, and cunning, and fleetness to the survival of the isolated individual. And will you not admit, sir, that it is no less easy to believe in, and to adore, a Deity who, out of the blind battle of creation had ordained the evolution of so noble an organ as the conscience, and the development of so high a function as the moral conduct, than it were to believe in and adore a Creator who had once for all implanted His law in a single pair of human hearts?

PAL. For the belief in His power and for the adoration of its majesty the one conception may doubtless serve as well as the other. But as bases for man's recognition of Him as a moral governor who will reward obedience and punish disobedience to His law, the two conceptions are of vastly unequal value. Is the righteous Judge of all the earth to visit the "undeveloped" with punishment for their imperfections?

DAR. Why not the "undeveloped" as well as the "unregenerate?" Nay, come, Dr. Paley, you are beckoning me to a region of mystery where you can walk with no surer foot than mine.

PAL. Your theory, sir, is fatal to the doctrine of man's free will.

DAR. A doctrine, however, which some of the greatest of theologians have rejected as inconsistent with the foreknowledge of God. Nay, sir, if a man must needs embrace the sombre creed of the Calvinists, he can reach it by

way of your hypothesis as easily as by mine; while, if his nature impels him to a more hopeful view of the Divine counsels, he will meet with no more obstacles in my hypothesis than in yours.

PAL. May I, without impertinence, Mr. Darwin, inquire in what sort of estimation you were held among the orthodox Christians of your time?

DAR. I hardly know how to answer your question. I enjoyed the friendship of many of them, and incurred, so far as I am aware, the ill will of none. Why should I, indeed? I never assailed their doctrines.

PAL. But was not the Christian world alarmed by your speculations? Did it not protest against them?

DAR. They excited at first a certain amount of uneasiness; but as to protest, I know no other way of protesting against opinions than that of showing them to be erroneous.

PAL. What? not that of denouncing them as contrary to religion?

DAR. It was not admitted in my day that the truth could be contrary to religion.

PAL. Your language begs the question, Mr. Darwin. What is accepted for truth may be violently contrary to religion. Had your contemporaries grown wiser than the Apostle, and did they believe that all danger from philosophy falsely so called had passed away?

DAR. No; but they thought, I imagine, that philosophy falsely so called could be exposed as false.

PAL. Indeed? Then truly they must have been sanguine. The conclusions of the philosophers are adopted by

multitudes of men who are quite incapable of following the processes by which they have been reached, and who would therefore be equally unable to comprehend their refutation. And when such conclusions commend themselves to the vulgar as ministering to their love of self-indulgence, or tranquillising their fears of supernatural authority, they are only too likely to be adopted with eagerness.

DAR. It is an unfortunate consequence of scientific inquiry, I allow; but tell me, Dr. Paley, would you seriously counsel men to desist from their attempts to discover truth for fear that their discoveries should produce a mischievous result in certain minds? And if so, how will you stop short of the policy of the mediæval Papacy, or at any rate of the principles on which that policy was founded? How will you escape the conclusion that whether Urban VIII. was right or wrong in inflicting tortures on Galileo, Galileo himself was to be condemned for not abstaining from speculations which were calculated to unsettle faith? You will not, I know, reply to me by insisting on the difference in importance between the beliefs that the Florentine astronomer was undermining and those which you think my hypothesis endangers; for you are too logical not to see that, since it is human opinion, whether that of a church or of a community, which measures the importance in each case alike of the imperilled belief, the principle of the two cases is identical.

PAL. I admit, sir, that men have no right to set a limit to the speculations of others, whatever I may have once thought to the contrary. The limit must be left to the conscience of the inquirer.

DAR. But you scarcely solve the difficulty by that admission. For what limits other than those which restrict the adoption and promulgation of opinions upon any matter affecting grave public interests, should the inquirer recognise? He is bound to exercise especial caution in drawing his conclusions, he is bound to weigh the objections to them with especial care. But these obligations once fulfilled, and his judgment satisfied by the evidence, is he not to declare his convictions?

PAL. You do not state the case completely. The evidence for a Divine government—by which I mean a direct and perpetual superintendence of the world—is of two kinds, material and moral, and you must not allow yourself to reject the former until you have well considered whether its defects, whatever you may suppose them to be, are or are not made good by the latter. The testimony of the creation may fail to convince you that the Deity was the artificer in detail, and is the ever-present guide in action, of the existing machinery of things, but the inward witness of your own heart may urge upon you with overwhelming force that He is. Are you sure, sir, that you have properly interrogated it?

DAR. All thoughtful men interrogate it, Dr. Paley, and at all seasons. But the answer that it returns is not capable of being tested by the understanding. It does not speak in the language of thought, but in that of emotion; and I cannot believe that the Author of our intellectual faculties could ever have intended us to depose them in favour of impulse and aspiration at the very moment and in respect of the very matters in which it is most important

that the supremacy of the understanding should be unchallenged.

PAL. You cannot have seen whither your argument is leading.

DAR. On the contrary, I have not only reasoned it out to its conclusion, but have acted upon it. It leads to the total separation of the intellectual faculties from the religious instincts. It impels us to follow the former alone in our inquiries, and to trust that the results we arrive at will prove adequate to the satisfaction of the latter. Nor for my own part, sir, have I in this been disappointed. For whenever in the intervals of my study I have paused to survey the fruits of my work, the contemplation of them has but served to deepen that emotion of awe which you have rightly described as the chief factor in the religious instincts of the heart.

PAL. Do you actually then lay claim, sir, to the title of a Christian?

DAR. Why not? I conformed, and with no feeling of insincerity, to the popular religion, accepting it as the highest and most satisfying form of homage to that all-embracing Mystery which I could no more fathom than the most untutored of the worshippers in the little church of my village.

PAL. It is not for me, sir, to say that your adoration was rejected by the all-merciful Being to the majesty of whose power your speculations—forgive me—have done such sad dishonour.

DAR. If it is not for you to say so, Dr. Paley, it is for

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